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**A BOOK
OF
DEVOTIONS AND SERMONS,**

Designed chiefly for the use of Mariners ;

BY THE

REV. GEORGE MACDONNELL,

BATHURST, NEW BRUNSWICK,

**Author of "Heathen Converts to the Worship of the God
of Israel."**

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PREFACE.

IN venturing to publish such a work as the present, the author may be permitted to mention that his own observation of seamen and the interest which he had been led to take in their welfare suggested to him the desirableness of some book designed for their especial benefit which should combine the character of devotion with that of Christian instruction. That the want has been felt both by the reflecting mariner and the enlightened traveller, he knows. But he is not aware that hitherto it has been supplied.

This statement may serve to explain why the following humble contributions for the highest good of them "that go down to the sea in ships" are submitted to the public. They comprise first, a series of morning and evening prayers for thirty-one days including four Sabbath days. These are intended for the use of the sailor in closet communion with God. And it is hoped that not unfrequently he will be found in the number of whom it is written, "They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."* In addition to the daily there are various prayers for particular times and occasions. The season of sickness and of death at sea may be referred to. Who, that has ever witnessed the interment of a departed brother by a ship's company while sailing on the depths of Ocean, but will admit that it is most solemnizing and affect-

* Jeremiah 5, 6.

ing? How sublime the grave-yard to which the deceased mariner is then committed! How in keeping with his profession the foaming billow of the deep blue sea which then rolls over him for his turf! How consecrated that receptacle for the dead! Jehovah is its exclusive Proprietor, for "the sea is His, and He made it." And amidst the unnumbered millions who lie there not a few "sleep in Jesus" awaiting the sound of the Archangel's trump that they may come forth to the resurrection of life eternal.

The second part of the Volume consists of Discourses, expository and practical, upon all the principal passages in the Word of God connected with the vocation of the sea-faring man. With each of these is associated a prayer preceding and one following. The Lord's prayer is intermediate and is offered alone, directly before the sermon. Psalms to be sung in worship, and a portion of Holy Scripture to be read, are indicated. This, it will be observed, is in accordance with the approved form of the Sanctuary observances of the Church of Scotland. And the author trusts that the completeness thus aimed at will not only encourage those who may wish to use them in public Divine service at sea, but will also be found suited to promote edification and the spirit of devout worship.

The importance of seamen as a class can scarcely be overestimated. Christians and Christian societies have, in some measure, become alive to this. Hence the energetic endeavours that, of late years, have been made for their improvement and above all for their salvation through the preaching of the Cross. What incalculable blessings might they become the instruments of conveying to their fellow-men, if, like the disciples of old, they would obey the Gospel

call and follow Jesus. They visit every land. They may yet be made by the grace of God successful heralds of that Name which alone is given under Heaven among men that they may be saved. Instead of being ministers of evil, they may be rendered missionaries of Christ to many a darkened and many a distant population among the continents and islands of the world. It is peculiarly incumbent upon all connected with the sea-girt isle to seek the true happiness and honour of this portion of their brethren.

It is under the influence of such convictions that this attempt is now made. If it shall operate to induce others, better qualified than the contributor of this offering is, to engage in prayerful labour for the temporal and eternal welfare of our fellow-sinners who carry on our maritime affairs, he will not have come forth in vain; and, if their exertions and productions shall be a thousand fold more successful than his, none will rejoice more cordially than he. It is after repeated and manifold trials that approximation to perfection is reached. It is hoped that a field almost new and unbroken will attract some of those who consecrate their literary ability to the Lord.

We have Scripture warrant for extemporaneous prayer. We are enjoined "to pray without ceasing, and in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to make our requests known unto God." We have numerous instances of individuals and companies addressing God in language arising out of the circumstances of the moment. And the whole scope of our Lord's teaching on the subject in His Sermon on the Mount implies that the utmost freedom is allowed us of our Heavenly Father. On the other hand, we have also encouragement from the Inspired Word in favour of

Liturgical devotion. From among the Psalms that were used as forms in the temple services he may refer to the 90th Psalm designated "A prayer of Moses the man of God." In that inspired composition the illustrious leader of Israel supplicates both for himself and the congregation. Though written primarily at a time of distress and anxiety, it is applicable to man and the Church on earth in all generations. Viewed as a prayer of Moses, it admirably points out to every man of God, and every one of the seed of Jacob, the spirit which he ought to cherish and evince.

He who employs forms of prayer should regard them as mere helps. He should have a depth and a length, a height and a breadth of desires, feelings, confessions, sentiments, and aspirations which forms may stimulate, but which they cannot supply. Prayer after all is most essentially personal converse with God. No man can adequately express all the experience of another at the throne of grace. There are secrets in the soul, hopes and fears, social affections, joys and sorrows, ten thousand emotions which the man for himself can alone express. This will help to show us of what unspeakable moment is solitary and individual communion with the Hearer of prayer. However necessary and invaluable the privileges of public and social worship are (and they are so in a high degree) yet to be alone with God in prayer is most indispensable to Spiritual life and prosperity. The Divine Teacher Himself has said to every one of His followers, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."*

When this exercise is regularly and conscientiously ob-

* Matthew 6, 6.

served by the spiritually minded suppliant, the soul will be prosperous ; when much neglected, the graces of the Spirit languish and the fruits of holiness are stinted or retarded. There can be no Divine life where it is altogether unknown. How delightful would it prove to be able to convey to the " babe in Christ " an adequately correct idea of how much knowledge and wisdom are communicated to the faithful follower of the Lamb when on bended knees and with prostrate spirit he is alone with God. How elevating that converse ! No wonder the Christian is wiser than the unbeliever. What a flood of light is sometimes poured into the inner man when engaged in this hallowed employment ! The disciple is never more near to as his Master than there. Away from the world, away from every thing earthly, he is then truly a follower of that Jesus who was wont frequently to seek the retirement of the mountain, or the secrecy of the desert, or the retreat of the garden, that he might secure an opportunity for fellowship with His Father. And this example all His people should imitate. " The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him ; and He will show them His covenant. " * " He must be alone with God at the hour of death. " At that awful period the tenderest and the dearest of all earthly friends cannot accompany us. How wise then, how urgently and impressingly proper to learn previously what it is to be alone with God ! Let then those who are alive unto God fear lest at any time they grieve the Holy Spirit by the omission of this imperative duty.

In prayers the adoption of a standard of character is unavoidable. That standard, the author apprehends, can only be that of one seeking God and therefore a child of God. So

* Psalms 25, 14.

soon as any of the fallen family of mankind draws nigh to the Hearer of prayer in truth and earnestness, he is a partaker of the life of God "Behold he prayeth" is an intimation that the sinner has passed from death unto life, even as the cry of the new-born infant is the first demonstration of its life. Obviously then in the preparation of a devotional guide it must be assumed that the offerer of prayer is a repentant and believing sinner.

The Author has not hesitated in the following compositions but preferred to borrow largely from the Book of God, and especially from the Psalms, which is almost entirely a Book of inspired prayers. Many of the sentiments and much of the language are purely from that source. This will be a guarantee that, so far at least, what is introduced is suitable and becoming as an address to the Most High at the footstool of His throne of grace. As he who would be strong in faith or "noble" in the fraternity of the flock of Christ must "search the Scriptures daily," a portion of the Divine Word is indicated to be read along with each prayer. Usually the selection for the morning is from the Old Testament, that for the evening from the New Testament. Occasionally a hymn of praise is specified which may be sung and a few 'meditations' are added with the prayers, which, it is hoped, may not prove unacceptable.

Of course it is not intended that the preparation of a series of prayers for the morning and for the evening shall be construed as intimating that nothing more than these is needed. Undoubtedly not less than three regular seasons of private daily prayer should satisfy the disciple of Jesus. Both what is requisite for growth in grace and what we are taught in Scripture go to impress this upon us. Here the Psalmist's

resolution may well be appropriated, "Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud ; and He shall hear my voice."*

While such ought to be our regular, periodic, habitual practice, it is equally clear that special seasons and occasions ought also to be observed. How emphatically is this taught in the example of the Blessed Redeemer. Previous to setting apart the twelve Apostles to their sacred office, He spent the whole night in prayer to God.† And this is but one of the instances furnished by the Evangelistic history of the Son of Man's being watchful unto prayer.

It is the author's very earnest prayer, that his work may have the effect of bringing the reader increasingly to the Word of God. One influence of the preparation of it upon his own mind has been to enable him profoundly to sympathise with the excellent writer who says, "In the Bible there is more that finds me than all I have experienced in all other books put together ;—the words of the Bible find me also at greater depths of my being. In the Bible I have found words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterances for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and my feebleness." What a running spring of devotion does the invaluable Psalter supply to the Church and children of God ! Not only does the composer of prayers find in it a perennial fountain from which to draw, but every Christian and every company engaged in devotional exercises will instinctively borrow from this hallowed source.

It needs only be added that the principle, upon which the author of this humble production of Christian literature has

* Psalm 55, 17.

† Luke 6, 12, 13.

sought to go, is that every member of Christ is bound to do whatever he can in his Master's cause. It is not by the seraphine alone or by the "principalities" of heaven alone that God is honoured. He graciously accepts the homage and the service of the humblest of mankind when they proceed from the contrite and loving spirit—and as the high "orders" of the celestial sanctuary have nothing to boast of when they have done all, having only rendered that dutiful tribute to the Infinite God which their position demands, so the least of the disciples of Jesus is imperatively called on to advance to the utmost of his power the glory of his Lord by the consecration of the whole man to God, and by striving to carry out the merciful and elevating purpose of Jehovah, of blessing man by man, of saving the perishing sinner by the instrumentality of the sinner already saved.

DEVOTIONS AND SERMONS.

THE CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth ; and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried ; He descended into hell ; the third day He arose again from the dead ; and ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic Church : the communion of saints ; the forgiveness of sins ; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. AMEN.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. AMEN.

PRAYER

BEFORE READING THE SCRIPTURES.

O Lord, Thou hast caused Thy Holy Word to be written for our instruction and salvation. In it Thou unfoldest man's disease and the remedy. "For the sake of the Saviour of men, here revealed as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, pardon all my sins. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Be pleased to bless my daily reading and searching of the Scriptures. May I experience their quickening and sanctifying influences. May they be profitable to me "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." All this I ask in the name of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour. Amen.

A CHILD'S MORNING PRAYER.

O Lord, my Heavenly Father, I praise Thee for keeping me in safety throughout the past night and this morning. I praise Thee for my life and all the blessings of life. Above all I praise Thee for Jesus Christ, Thine unspeakable Gift. For His sake pardon all my sins. Make me a new creature in Him, and good by His Holy Spirit. Teach me to love and to obey my dear father and mother, to love my sisters and brothers, and to be dutiful in all the relations of life. Bless all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. Have mercy upon the Jews and all mankind. Graciously accept of me through Jesus Christ my only Saviour. Amen.

A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

O Lord, my Heavenly Father, I praise Thee for all the blessings of the past day, and for all the blessings that flow to me through Thy Beloved Son. Pardon for His sake all my sins. Pardon the sins I have this day committed. Create in me a clean heart and make me a good child by Thy Holy Spirit. Bless my dear father and mother, all my dear relations, friends, benefactors, and well-wishers. Forgive my enemies. Look in compassion upon all mankind. Watch over me this night for good, preserve me from all evil, and, if it be Thy holy will, may I awake and arise on the morning of a new day to praise, love, and serve Thee for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

This night I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep ;
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

A SEAMAN'S PRAYER

ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Read Matthew, Chap. 2nd.

O God of my life and salvation, I beseech Thee to enable me now to engage in Thy holy worship. Give unto me that faith without which it is impossible to please Thee; for "he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." May I not only have faith in God, in Thy existence, perfections, and government; may I also believe in Jesus Thy Beloved Son. Through faith in Him may I be enabled to draw nigh unto Thee as a loving child to my Heavenly Father.

Blessed be the name of God, that, though in my first federal head I became a sinner, by the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, I obtain regeneration and life eternal: How glorious is that promise which Thou didst give to fallen man, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head. This gracious intimation, oft repeated, with ever increasing clearness, animated Thy children before the beatific day arrived when Christ was born. O God, I am reminded this day, which I in Thy good providence am permitted to see, of Thy faithfulness, truth, and redeeming love. When the fulness of the time had arrived, Jesus was born in Bethlehem according to the prediction of the prophet. Praised be Jehovah for the birth of this Incarnate Son of God. He came to publish peace on earth and good-will to the children of men. O may I have the blessedness of the people who know the joyful sound.

Thou faithful and covenant-keeping God, I praise and magnify the riches of Thy grace, that I have seen the day of the Son of man. What kings, and prophets, and righteous men of old desired to see and hear, Thou hast vouchsafed unto me even on the stormy deep, when "the fresh sea sprinkles the sloping deck." O that I may be faithful to the obligations under which I am laid by Thy goodness and grace. May Jesus be my Saviour. May I ever have room for Him in my soul, in my dwelling, in my business, in my life, in my joys, in all things.

O Lord, Thou hast, indeed given strong consolation to them who have fled for refuge to the Hope set before them in the Gospel. Glory be to Him who came in the name of the Lord to save sinners. In Him Thou, O Eternal Father, art ever well pleased. In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. O I adore Thee for this embodiment of Thy Divine attributes in the man Christ Jesus. How happy for poor darkened sinners ! He that hath seen Thee, O Adorable Saviour, hath seen the Father, for Thou art in the Father and the Father is in Thee. Without this manifestation I never could have known God. May I now contemplate the beauty of holiness as exhibited in my Lord and Redeemer, and be enabled by His faith to grow up unto the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ.

May the return and associations of this day be salutary to all who celebrate it. May all Christians rejoice holly in Him who is " the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." May the salutation of the High Priest of His people be everywhere diffused throughout the earth until all nations and people shall bow down to Immanuel. And unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be the glory, world without end. Amen.

A SEAMAN'S PRAYER

FOR THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

Read Psalms 90 and 103.

MEDITATION.

How similar is the year to human life on earth ! Both have their youth and their early joys. When spared to maturity of age, man looks back and remembers his youthful days when the spirits were light and hope was high, when the eye was bright and the cheek unfurrowed, when the disappointments and sorrows of the world had not impressed anxiety on the countenance or dried-up the warm affections of the heart.

How affectingly does the time call for self-examination, repentance, and renewed dedication unto God ! Have I indeed been pardoned freely through the redemption that is in Christ ? And, if I am a recipient of such inestimable felicity, what return have I made to my Gracious Saviour ? Have I been re-

deeming the time so that I might be a strong man in Christ? Have I carefully prayed and contributed, and laboured, and striven for my Christian and for my unsaved brethren? O what entreaty of Divine mercy, what humbling of myself, what godly sorrow, contrition, repentance should such enquiries awaken and produce.

PRAYER.

Lord, Thou hast been the dwelling-place of Thy people in all generations. Thou art the everlasting God. Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.”*

I meditate with admiration and delight upon Thy forbearance, love, and compassion to man. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust. As for man his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children.”†

What solemn thoughts, O God, does the close of the year bring with it! Grateful homage and praise are due to Thee who hast kept me in safety throughout the days and nights of the year that is now closing. At sea and ashore, when tossed by the terrific storm and when sailing with the fair wind filling my sails, God hath been with me,—with me for good, multiplying loving-kindness and tender mercy unto me. And now, O Heavenly Parent, I have an enhanced feeling of Thy goodness bestowed upon me every morning and every moment, every evening and every hour of the year that is so rapidly hastening to its end. Glory, glory be ascribed to Thy most Gracious Name. So teach me henceforth to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.

* Psalm 103, 26, 27.

† Psalm 103, 13, 17.

How soon will my last day come ! How soon shall I stand at the judgement-seat of Christ ! How soon shall all my conduct and character be unrolled before an assembled universe ? God of my spirit, God of my salvation, who hast loved me with an eternal love, prepare and make me ready for that day of days.

May the time to come be better spent than that which is past. May the coming year if I should be spared to enjoy the precious blessings of life during its course, be the happiest of my experience. Most devoutly do I seek to praise Thee for Thy compassion and grace during the days that are ended. Thou hast sustained me in safety and health, from injury and death throughout another year. Thou hast led me by a way that I knew not, Thou hast satisfied all my returning wants, filling me with food and gladness. Thou hast also been the Gracious Father providing for the necessities of my soul. For the sake of Thy Beloved Son Thou hast given me Thy Word and ordinances, Thy Sabbaths, Thy throne of grace and Thy Holy Spirit. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits ?

I mourn over my shortcomings and my sins ; alas ! how few and imperfect my fruits of righteousness ! O let not another year pass over my head without great spiritual improvement. How many, who began the year with as bright a prospect of seeing its termination as I had, are now lying in the house appointed for all living !—in the grave—where there is no work, wisdom, knowledge, nor understanding ! O as the living may I ever praise Thee by my life.

Bless my beloved friends and relations. May those who are not in Christ hasten to Him for pardon and salvation. O Lord, make speed to save them, make haste to help them. Bless the Tract Society. May it be increasingly honoured and useful. Bless those Bible Societies to which it gave the first impulse. Bless all Christian enterprises, labourers and associations, for Thy glory and the good of mankind. May Thy special favour rest upon my fellow-seamen with whom I sail and all our brethren. May the new, the coming year be a period of great good to them. May many be everlastingly saved. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be all glory both now and for ever. Amen.

A SEAMAN'S PRAYER

FOR THE FIRST DAY OF THE YEAR.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Thou hast in Thy great goodness permitted me to enter upon a new year. In Thy good and merciful Providence Thou has given me to see another of those epochs that make up the life of man in this world. I hope then that I, a frail and sinful mortal, can rejoice in Thy Eternal and Unchangeable existence ; " For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. " *

Enable me to begin this year aright. I believe that nothing is so appropriate to the incoming of the moment of a New year as prayer to God. And the first day of the year should be one of special prayer: I would this day dedicate myself anew to Thee, the God of my life and salvation. Keep me this day from sinful levity and godless mirth. While I may on a New Year's day participate with gladness and gratitude in the social enjoyments that are natural and suitable to the season, O may I ever chiefly and above all things seek after spiritual improvement and holy nearness to my God. May the love of Christ constrain me to judge that Christ died for me that I who live may not live unto myself but unto Him who died for me and arose again.

O satisfy me early with Thy mercy that I may rejoice and be glad all my days. Grant unto me the fulness of pardon that is sealed to the believer in the blood of Christ. And grant unto me a vivid sense of the reception of this pardon. May I realise this precious boon and that right early. Even now, Heavenly Father, bestow it upon me. Let not this day, this hour, this approach unto Thee pass away without my obtaining it. I desire with all my heart to love Thee supremely and to turn from all my sins. Give me Thy spirit and grace that I may be altogether conformed to the image of my Saviour. Forbid that I should henceforth walk in conformity with the world. May I be transformed in the renewing of my mind, that I may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of Thine. From this day forward

* Psalms 90, 4.

may I serve Thee with that holy joy which is the birthright of the new creature in Christ Jesus. May this grace of Thy Spirit be ever more my happiness. May it be mine in the day of early and of more advanced life, in the day of health and that of sickness, in prosperity and adversity ; in all my circumstances may it be my blessedness to possess it. May this gushing fountain of rejoicing in my soul console me at all times.

I pray for blessings upon those with whom I am connected by nature, friendship, and grace. I thank thee for them. Alas ! how death assails the dearest ! I already know what it is to have lost the friends of my childhood and youth, and I shall more and more feel of the separation caused by the insatiate archer that I am a stranger on the earth. Sanctify, O God, all the relations of life to me. And sanctify those by Thy Spirit to whom I sustain these relations. May the new and now revolving year be one of increased blessings to us. May Thy love fill our hearts. May we repent more thoroughly and live more godly in Christ Jesus than in days gone-by we have done.

For Thy temporal and spiritual mercies of the past year I desire to give Thee glory and praise. Pardon my misimprovement of them. How often may I have been as the unfruitful tree that was in danger of being cut down as a cumberer of the ground. O God, give me grace to walk in newness of life.

Be pleased to bless the nations of the world. Bless my country. Bless the Church of Christ throughout the earth. Bless that portion of it to which I belong. May zeal for Thy glory and love to souls stimulate her to increasing labours. May the population at Home and that of the world at large engage her prayers, her alms, and her efforts. May Jew and Gentile be everlastingly benefited by her. May her pastors be wise to win souls and watch as they that must give account. May her office-bearers be actuated by the spirit of Christ. May her members be truly Christian, ready to distribute and willing to communicate. May she be a blessing to great multitudes far off and near.

Regard with Thy pity the poor and needy. Compassionate

the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger. Be the God of the mariner on the perilous deep, and of all who travel by land or sea. Comfort the mourner, succour the distressed, relieve the suffering, and prepare the dying for eternity.

Have mercy upon those who are living without God in the world. Confirm and perfect Thy work where there is some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.

"From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle, and murder, and from sudden death, Good Lord, deliver us."

Even now, Heavenly Father, be with me. The longer that I live, the more may I be ready to die and meet for the inheritance of saints in light. And now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only-Wise God be glory and honour, dominion and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER

SUITED FOR A DAY OF HUMILIATION, FASTING, AND
SEEKING GOD WITH RENEWED REPENTANCE.

Read Hosea, Chap. 13th.

O God my Heavenly Father, I now repair to the footstool of Thy throne that I may pour out my soul before Thee. Like Israel of old I too am a backslider. I have fallen by mine iniquity. My ingratitude and want of supreme and constant affection to Thee are rebuked in the language Thou didst employ to Thy peculiar people. "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." Thou didst draw me also "with cords of a man;" for by Thine own Son hast Thou spoken unto me, by His life in human nature, His sufferings, His death, His resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of The Majesty on High, the outpouring of His purchased Spirit, His all-prevailing intercession, His providence,—by all that pertains to the Mediator, Son of God and Son of man, hast Thou drawn me and sought to draw me more to Thyself. "With bands of love" also hast Thou designed to confirm me in love to Thee, the God of love. By all the manifested love of Thy Only-Begotten Son, and especially by His dying and deathless love, hast Thou been uniting me to Him who is One with Thee, the

Father, in the everlasting covenant of love not to be forgotten or broken.

But alas ! though, I trust, I may say I have tasted and seen and felt that Thou art gracious, yet how much have I to mourn over. Even since I believed in Thy Beloved Son, how much of backsliding has characterised my course. This has retarded my progress in the Divine life. Alas ! Every day of even my regenerated state has shown a series of departures from Thee, the fountain of living waters. Yet through Thy merciful forbearance and restoring Spirit I return to Thee ; for, O my Father, I cannot remain away from Thee. "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul for God, the Living God." This is Thy doing, Lord. Thou still drawest me "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Heal my backslidings and love me freely. Pardon all my sins, and sanctify me wholly.

How great is Thy loving-kindness ! Thou teachest me in Thy Word what as a returning sinner I should pray for. May I take with me words and plead with Thee for remission of guilt and the renovation of Thy Spirit that I may be able to render Thee "the calves of my life" in fervent praise. Lord, help me. Send help from on High. Save Lord or I perish. Work in me both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure. Divine Spirit of Christ, incline and enable me to be entirely conformed to the image of my Lord. It belongs to Thy work to aid the striving sinner that his heart and mind and life may correspond to Thy revealed Word. My trust is in Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the God of my salvation.

Enable me, O Lord, ever to choose Thee and the things of Thy kingdom for my chiefest joy. I would prefer "the dew of heaven to the fatness of the earth"—to "plenty of corn and wine." Give me those graces of the Spirit which are the manna hidden in the dew. Give me out of the infinite fulness of Christ even grace for grace. Henceforth may I walk more worthy of my high calling. And to Thy great name, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost shall be all the glory, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

Hosea, Chap. 13. This Chapter affords admirable matter for the child of God returning in godly contrition to his Heavenly Father. Verse 3rd is capable of exquisite analogous suggestion. "Asshur shall not save us ; we will not ride upon horses ; neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods." These had been prominent sins of Israel. How obvious the lesson to the repentant believer ! This chapter should also induce a yearning desire and prayerfulness for the time when God will most fully be as the dew unto Israel. How glorious is the Father's promise to the Son.—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness as from the womb of the morning : Thou hast the dew of Thy youth."

The chapter appears suitable for a day or season of fasting ; and fasting will always be binding on *the Christian* so long as he has to mourn an absent or an offended Lord.

PRAYER

FOR A SEASON OF SPECIAL THANKSGIVING.

Read Revelation, Chap. 22nd.

O Thou God of free and sovereign grace, with feelings of adoration and gratitude beyond what I can express would I now approach unto Thee. O Thou blessed Redeemer, what words do flow from Thy lips ! They are sweeter than honey to my taste. What soul-striving, spirit-elevating testimony hast Thou caused to be inscribed on the page of Inspired Truth ! I there hear Thee saying—"I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." O how affecting ! How drawing ! How irresistible to me ! I would respond, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for Thy love is better than wine. Because of the savour of Thy good ointment Thy name is as ointment poured forth."* How precious is Thy name, O Immanuel !—"the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star !"

To Thee, O Jesus, David's Lord and David's Son, the origin and the offspring of David, to Thee I owe every thing.

* Song of Solomon, 1, 2, 3.

To Thee every believer owes all that is good and felicitous in man or to man for time and for eternity. To Thy Incarnation, O Thou Eternal Word, we are indebted for the revelation of Divine Truth in the Holy Scriptures, for pardon of sin, illumination of the soul, holiness and eternal life. To Thy blessed work of redemption, pledged in the counsels of eternity, is all the salvation of sinners to be ascribed and the glory of it for ever. What love can be compared to Thy love ? It is love unparalleled. How infinitely beautiful as seen in the promised Deliverer on the day of man's first transgression and onwards to the hour in which Thou didst bow Thy head on Calvary's Cross and pronounce respecting Thy undertaking, "It is finished !" To Thy mediation are owing all the agency, and all the machinery, and all the instrumentality by which such poor sinners, as I am, are invited and brought to Thee for life everlasting. Thou art the Fountain of living waters, the Rock of Salvation, the Refuge and Dwelling-place of the returned sinner. To Thee we owe the gladsome invitations of the Gospel—so free, so universal, that whoever will may take of the water of life freely.

Henceforth may my life be hid with Christ in God. As for whatever others do, O may I live to God and be entirely consecrated to Thy glory. I would live looking for the second coming of my Lord. Make me ready for that glorious appearing. May every duty be discharged, every pleasure enjoyed, every privilege improved, under the influence of His coming, "with sin unto salvation." "Now unto Him that is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the Only-Wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

A SEAMAN'S PRAYER IN SICKNESS.

Read Hebrews, 12th Chap.

Enable now, O Lord, a guilty creature such as I am to draw nigh unto Thee, the God with whom I have to do. In Thy hand are the issues of life. Thou killest and Thou makest alive. From Thee cometh the bright day of health and prosperity, and the dark day of adversity and sickness. All things

come of Thee. I am Thine, O Lord. By Thy goodness I at first breathed the breath of life and became a living creature. Thy paternal providence hath ever watched over me and sustained me. Though I have often forgotten Thee, Thou hast never forgotten me. Alas ! how I have forgotten Thee, my Divine Benefactor. I have been ungrateful to the Fountain of all my blessings. Compassionate and pardon for Jesus Christ's sake the sins of my life, my murmurings, and all the iniquities of my past life.

It becomes me on this day of sore trial and sadness to humble myself and to repent in dust and ashes. I know that "affliction cometh not from the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. I would therefore "seek unto God and unto God would I commit my cause : Who doest great things and unsearchable ; marvellous things without number : Who givest rain upon the earth, and sendest waters upon the fields : To set up those that be low ; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety."

Lord, Thou art now dealing with me. Thou art speaking to me in this affliction. O may I properly hear what God the Lord doth speak. May I be wise to know. For Thou speakest peace to Thy people who return not to folly. O that I may be among this number ! Make this, most merciful God, for the sake of the Saviour who shed His blood for perishing, guilty sinners, not only a day of rebuke, may it be a day of mercy to me, and may mercy rejoice against judgement.

Whom Thou lovest, most Wise Father, Thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest. Give me the adoption of Thy children. Pour out upon me the Spirit of Christ that I may cry unto Thee, Abba, Father. But woe is me I have resisted Thy Spirit, and despised the blood of the everlasting covenant, the only blood that can take away sin. I have loved evil rather than good. I have sinned against light and love. This day my sins seem to rise up in judgement against me. I have deserved Thy wrath, O Thou Holy One of Israel. Yet spare me. Remember Thy mercy, and that Thy Only Son died for hell-deserving sinners. Draw me, O Jesus, and I will run after Thee, for in Thee alone have I pardon, righteousness, and strength. Hast Thou not declared that whosoever

cometh unto Thee, Thou wilt in no wise cast out ? Blessed Lord, I now come weary and heavy-laden. O for justification and peace in believing ! Give me the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to keep my heart and mind. Free me from all my sins. Deliver me not only from hell and punishment, but from the sin of my soul in all its aspects. I see and feel something of its odiousness. It is infinitely hateful. O save me from it. The burden of it is intolerable to me. O my Redeemer, Thou sayest "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden." Thou promisest rest to them, Lord Jesus. I now come, I fully believe that "Thy yoke is easy and Thy burden light."

Overrule this trouble for good. If consistent with Thy holy will, O spare me a little longer upon Thy footstool. I would praise Thee in the land of the living. If Thou, O Lord, art pleased to restore me, may I walk before Thee in newness of life. I now commend my soul and every thing that concerns me into Thy hand. May transgressors learn Thy law ; and be turned unto Thee. O may Thy glory be declared in great multitudes being saved.

Listen, Heavenly Father, to these my imperfect supplications, and grant me an answer of mercy and love for the sake of Thy Only Begotten Son, my only Saviour. Amen.

PRAYER

SUITABLE FOR THE OCCASION OF A FUNERAL AT SEA.

Read 1 Corinthians, Chap. 15.

Sing Paraphrase 8, 11.

O Everlasting God, "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return ye children of men. Thou carriest them away as with a flood." Verily, O Lord, "we spend our years as a tale that is told."

How solemn is the time ! How solemn is the place ! How solemn are our circumstances ! How solemnising this awful hour and this sad duty that we now perform ! It has pleased Almighty God, the Author and the Disposer of all existence, with whom are the issues of life and death, to take from this mortal life the soul of our poor dear brother. He hath departed from among us, and from among all the living. His

spirit hath returned to God who gave it. And we now commit his body "to the deep to be turned into corruption" until that glorious day when the dead shall arise and the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality."

O God of the spirits of all flesh, Thou omniscient witness of the whole man, Thou knowest how powerfully and sadly we are at this moment afflicted. How lately was our brother one of us. He partook of our joys and sorrows. But now he hath no longer "a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Death hath claimed him for his prey. The insatiate archer hast pointed his unerring and fatal dart. Our brother hath gone the way which all the living in their turn must tread. He shall not return to us, but we shall each follow him. We do now commit his mortal remains to this watery grave. And all our consolation and hope are in Thee, O God. O blessed Jesus, Thou canst disperse the gloom of this terrible hour. Thou canst cast light even upon the dark caverns of the tomb. Thou didst Thyself sleep in death and lie in the grave, and Thou hast triumphed over and overcome both death and the grave as well as every other enemy on behalf, and as the representative of Thy people. Thou givest to Thy disciples "the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life." May we, the living who know that we must die, lay these things to heart. Thou hast the keys of the invisible world and of death. The world of spirits will at the appointed period yield the souls of Thy ransomed children, and the grave, whether in the depths of ocean or in the sepulchres of earth, shall yield their precious deposits, and soul and body be reunited in a felicity without imperfection and without end. O Thou, most Glorious Jehovah Jesus, may each of us now be washed from our pollution in Thy all-cleansing blood, made one with Thee and holy as Thou art holy, having Thy Spirit abiding with us, that we may be found among the number of "the blessed" when Thou shalt appear in the judgement. And the glory shall be all and eternally thine, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

AFTER INTERMENT.

O God with whom we have to do, we adore Thee as infinitely wise and good. We know that death hath passed upon all men because all have sinned, We bless Thy name for The Revelation of Thy love in Christ Jesus. In Him we know that whosoever liveth and believeth shall not die eternally. O may we be partakers of spiritual life in Thy Son. May He be "the Resurrection and the Life" to us. For whatever is comforting in connection with our dear deceased brother, we do now give Thee humble and hearty thanks. Sanctify to us who yet remain this awful dispensation of Thy providence. Be Thou the God of hope to us. Teach every man of us to say, "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain." O give us that holy faith so beautifully displayed by the patriarch, and enable us to say with him, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And, though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."*

What shall we render to Thee, O Lord, for the glorious and abundant promises of Thy Holy Word with respect to the future? May we henceforward live under the influence of the Archangel's trump. We know that the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth. They too that sleep in the unfathomed caves of the sea shall hear it and respond. Praised and glorified be the God of all grace and salvation, that among the most august of all congregations, when all shall stand at the seat of Christ, and when the Judge shall issue His decision, then will be found men of the sea, poor sailors, who will be comprehended in the beatific sentence "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." O God, grant that we may be among the number through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* Job 19, 25, 27.

DAILY PRAYERS.

FIRST DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Isaiah, Chap. 45.

Almighty and most Merciful Father, I desire to draw nigh unto Thee with the profoundest reverence and humility, that I may call upon Thy most holy name with adoring supplication, devotion, and praise. I would come now and ever resting all my hopes of acceptance, pardon, and holiness upon Jesus, Thy Beloved Son.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits ! How great has been Thy goodness unto me, O Thou God of my life, in days that are past ! It is of Thy mercies that I am not consumed, because Thy compassions fail not. " They are new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I hope in Him."* Above all things would I praise Thee, Eternal Father, for Jesus Christ, Thine unspeakable gift. Blessed be He who came in the name of the Lord to seek and to save lost sinners. I come unto Thee, Fountain of purity, deeply convinced of my sinfulness. By nature I am corrupt and vile, unfit for the society and not meet for the inheritance of saints in light. By practice and habit also I am sinful. Adored be the God of condescending and most amazing love, who encourageth such sinners as I am to trust in the Divine Saviour whom He hath sent into the world. I hear His voice in the Word of Revelation saying, "Look unto Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else."* Lord, I am earnestly solicitous to obey the gracious mandate and by a living faith appropriate Him who is omnipotent to save. I believe that He and He only is able to meet the case of any sinner. And I cannot doubt His willingness who gave Himself a sacrifice and a sin-offering for guilty man. O Thou, Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the world, save me, I beseech Thee, a most guilty and wrath-deserving rebel. Surely, O my Saviour, I am moved by Thy love. Draw me and I will run after Thee, for Thou art the Lord my righteousness and salvation.

* Jeremiah, 3, 23, 24.

I have again, Heavenly Father, in Thy Providence been enabled to enter upon a new voyage. I have seen the shore and the places of busy concourse receding from my view. I am now again for a season to be as if secluded from the society of men in general. My fellow-seamen and I are to be companions. May He, who is the God of the sea and of the dry land, bless us and make us blessings to one another.

When I look around and behold only the firmament of heaven above and the deep blue sea around me, it becomes me to be deeply awed and solemnised. When I reflect upon the past, O what devout gratitude should I feel towards Thee, my unwearied Benefactor and Preserver. Many who began the voyage of mortal life along with me are now tenanted the house appointed for all living. Some of them are reposing beneath the clods of the valley and some in the depths of Ocean. O may the living and may I lay the solemn thought, that we too must rapidly follow, to heart. Give me grace, God of all grace, to prepare for the future and to be ready for the summons of the last messenger. When I shall stand at the judgement-seat of Christ, may I be found washed in His precious blood and clothed with His pure righteousness. At whatever time I shall sleep in death, may I fall asleep in Christ. Even now I hear my Lord saying, "Lo! I come quickly." With humility, faith, and love I would respond. "Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

That I may be thus blessed, be pleased to bestow upon me, Hearer of prayer, the indwelling and influences of Thy Spirit. May the character of the man be mine who "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night"*

While I implore from Thee ability to consecrate myself to Thee in profound love, I also fervently supplicate Thy rich blessings to descend upon our Commander, ship's crew, and all on board. Speed and prosper us, if it be Thy holy will, with favourable breezes; above all send us, Good Lord,

* Psalms, 1, 112.

spiritual life and prosperity. May we all reverence Thy name, sanctify Thy Sabbath, and attentively read and hear Thy holy Word. May we be the prayerful disciples of Christ.

I now commend me, Giver of all good, to Thy paternal direction and favour this day. Keep me from sin. May I be enabled to honour Thee in the proper discharge of every duty and in the proper enduring of every trial. Be graciously ever present as the God of love and peace with those who are especially dear unto me. And may many come from the East, West, North, and South, who shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. Mercifully accept of me and answer my prayer through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

FIRST DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Ephesians, Chap. 5.

O Thou whose I am and whom I serve, do Thou bend a gracious ear to the voice of my humble prayer. By the Spirit of Christ outpoured may I be enabled to worship in reverence, faith, and love.

With Thee, O God, is the fountain of life, in Thy light shall I see light. I come unto Thee that I may confess and forsake my sins. I acknowledge that I am by nature sinful, that my heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and that I have committed in my practice the two great evils of forsaking Thee, the Fountain of living waters, and of hewing unto myself cisterns,—broken cisterns that can hold no water. Deeply sensible of my guilt, I desire to humble myself before Thee, and to repent in dust and ashes. Give me that repentance that needeth not to be repented of.

When I behold what sin is, as seen in the suffering and death of my Redeemer, how can I but hate and turn from it? Especially would I do so in my own case. Adored be Thy name, O Thou against whom I have sinned, I have Thy promise that, confessing my sins, Thou art faithful and just to forgive me my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.*

* 1 John 1, 9.

Thou art inviting and commanding me to believe for pardon and eternal life in the name of Thy Only-Begotten Son. Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief. Grant me true repentance and the assured remission of my sins. May I walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. May grace and peace be multiplied unto me.

I entreat Thee, Heavenly Father, to bless me throughout this voyage. During the days and nights of its continuance may I advance in all goodness, righteousness and faith. Daily may I prayerfully peruse and search Thy holy Word. May it be my counsellor and the rule of my conduct. May I drink deeply of its spirit. May I be sanctified through its truth.

Impress upon my heart the lessons I have just been reading. May fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness be far from me. May I also avoid filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting, which are not convenient. Forbid that whoredom or intemperance should ever take away my heart. May I keep myself pure. May I be truly awakened from the sleep of carnal security and the death in trespasses and sins. May Christ be in me my life. May I walk circumspectly, not as a fool but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. May my life henceforth be "by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." May I be one of His true and lively members.

Bless all who are very dear to me. May they be partakers of Divine life in their souls. Multiply grace, mercy, love and peace unto Israel. Have compassion upon all mankind.

Holy Father, I now commit me to thy guardianship and love. Protect and keep me through the night-watches. May I awake to praise Thee.

"Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only-Wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

SECOND DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read 2nd Chronicles, Chap. 26.

Enable me, O most Gracious God, to approach and worship Thee in spirit and in truth. I come unto Thee in the name of my Glorious Mediator, Christ Jesus. I believe in Him as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

O God of everlasting love, I am amazed at Thy goodness and compassion in having provided for such a guilty rebel and lost sinner as I am the Son of Thy love to be a High Priest such as is fitted for my nature and wants. On His sacrifice and all-prevailing intercession I do now entirely rely. In myself not only am I vile, I am helpless also. I am both without good and incapable of doing good. But in Thee, O Lord, is my help found. I am taught by my Heavenly Master—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."* O may I know, Blessed Jesus, experimentally the beauty of the precept and the faithfulness of the promise.

I feel, O Thou Holy One of Israel, an earnest and a longing desire to do all that is right in Thy sight. Enable me to do this not merely according to any religious education I may have received, but according to the spirit and tenour of Thy Holy Word. May the Holy Spirit savingly discover to me its spiritual bearing. May I understand the length and breadth of Thy law. When Thou sayest unto me, "My son, give Me thine heart," may I most cordially reply, "Take me wholly, Lord, in soul, body, and spirit—a living sacrifice acceptable through Jesus Christ." When Thou sayest unto me, "Seek My face," my heart responds, "Thy face, Lord, seek will I." Surely it is Thyself, Lord, that hast worked in me *to will*. And surely, O Thou that hearest prayer, Thou wilt answer my supplication and work in me *to do* thy holy pleasure; this is the carrying-out of Thine own work. May that

* Matthew 7, 7, 8.

work of sanctification be carried on until the day of Jesus Christ. Unless Thou accomplish all this, I shall come ruinously short. But my hope is in the Lord ; from Him cometh all my expectation.

May I be enabled to follow Thee fully, God of all grace. I am prone to rest satisfied with the gift and ungratefully to forget the Divine Giver. By Thy preventing grace, O Heavenly Father, deliver me from this sin. May I daily deny myself, take up the cross, and follow Jesus. May I crucify the flesh with all its affections and lusts. Enable me to slay every idol, whether pride, vanity, ambition, love of the world, whatever it may be. Let me have no reservation either in striving against sin or in an entire surrender of the wholeman to Thee. Should it please Thee to visit me with advancement and success in life, may I never forget to whom I owe it all, the responsibility that attaches to superior trust, and the account which I shall have to render of my stewardship when I shall be no longer a steward. May it be my aim to glorify Thee in all things. May my conversation be such as become a ransomed member of Christ.

I pray, God of the Bible, for Thy effectual blessing to accompany my reading of Thy Word this morning. O may I ever be humble and contrite. By nature I am the subject of a leprosy more filthy and dreadful than that which the pride of his heart entailed upon king Uzziah. O may I be washed and may I wash again in the all-cleansing fountain of my Ransomer's blood. And, after I have plunged in the Jordan of death, may I be separated from all remains of my spiritual plague and be made perfectly holy for ever.

Be with me for good this day to the beginning of which Thou hast in Thy goodness kept me. Bless my shipmates, relatives and friends with the joys of Thy salvation. May a glorious company of the human family be made partakers of life everlasting. And the glory shall be Thine, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

SECOND DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

*Sing Psalms 146, 8.**Read Galatians, Chap. 3.*

Unto Thee, O Eternal Father, I this evening draw nigh in the name of Thy Only-Begotten Son. Enable me by faith to behold the Lamb that was slain. May I feed upon Him as "the Bread of life." May He be made of God unto me wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

I adore Thee, God of salvation, for Thy wonderful and mysterious method of saving the sinner. How glorious is that Blessed Gospel by the faith of which the Jew and the Heathen, they that are far off and they that are nigh at hand, they that dwell on the land and they that sail on the sea, are saved. I praise Thee that Thou didst before the advent of Messiah make the promise of His coming conducive and effectual in the sanctification of believers. How beautiful and grand the company that even then looked to Him and were saved! I praise Thee for the record of the faith of Abraham, for the preaching of the "good news to the father of the faithful." May I be blessed with faithful Abraham. May I be a partaker of that faith by which he was justified without the deeds of the law. May the law be my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ. In it I see the purity and the perfection which Thou demandest of Thy rational and moral creatures. Nor has sin changed the nature and extent of these requirements, though it brings me under the curse of that law which is holy, just, and good. I feel that so far from having continued in all things written in the book of the law to do them, I have violated the spirit, if not the letter of all. Out of Christ, I must sink under the terrible curse which Thy justice denounces against transgressors of Thy law.

O Lord Most Merciful, O God Most Holy, forbid that I should be out of Christ. There is no condemnation to the sinner in Christ Jesus. In Him may I have pardon and righteousness. How innumerable and various have been my sins of thought, word, and deed, of corruption and desire, of lust, anger, and selfishness, of want of love to Thee and to

my neighbours, O I am lost if held to that covenant of works whose terms are—"the man that doeth them shall live by them." But I betake myself to Jesus as my Saviour. I take hold of that better covenant than that made with Adam,—of the covenant made with the man Christ Jesus for man,—of the covenant of eternal love made with Thy Only-Begotten and Well-Beloved Son on behalf of all believing sinners. O may I by the Spirit of Thine Anointed be enabled to say, "Christ hath redeemed *me* from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me. And, while thus enabled to cleave by faith to my crucified Redeemer, O grant that I may also, by the sanctifying operation of His Spirit, become righteous even as He is righteous. May I be strong in Him and in the power of His might. May I be taught to say—"In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

Father of all, I earnestly supplicate the same blessing for my dear friends, relatives, companions, and especially for those of this ship's company. May they awake to righteousness and sin no longer in the sleep of carnal security and unconcern. Watch over us this night. May goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our lives and may our dwelling-place be in Thy house for ever. May my repose be healthful and hallowed. May I awake and arise on a coming day, if it be Thy holy will, to serve and glorify Thee. And to Thy great name, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, shall be ascribed the kingdom, the honour and the glory, world without end. Amen.

THIRD DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Read Psalms, Chaps. 7 and 8.

With profound reverence, Almighty God, would I now draw nigh to Thee, and worship at the footstool of Thy throne. Thou graciously encouragest the sinful children of men to come unto Thee in the day of salvation. I believe, O God, that this is the day of my merciful visitation. In it may I know the things that belong to my peace. Justified by faith, may I have peace with God through my Lord Jesus Christ.

"The entrance of Thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple." Accompany, O Lord, my reading of

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it with the saving influences of Thy Spirit. May I be enlight-
ened, convinced, quickened to newness of life, and carried
forward in progressive sanctification by His Divine agency in
my soul.

How glorious, Eternal Father, is Thy everlasting love to
man ! Thou didst not withhold Thine Only Son, but didst
give Him up to the death that whosoever believeth in Him
might not perish but have everlasting life. Praised be the
risen and glorified Redeemer who commanded the Gospel to be
preached to all the world. "Blessed are the people that
know the joyful sound."

Grant unto me, I beseech thee, Heavenly Father, that a holy
life may evidence that I know the glad tidings and am being
sanctified through the Truth. From day to day may I in-
creasingly experience the renewing of the Holy Ghost. May
I be strong in faith and fervent in love.

May the Spirit of all grace seal me unto the Day of Redemp-
tion. May He enable me to cry unto Thee, Abba, Father.
Lord, receive me into Thy family as one of Thy adopted chil-
dren. Whether I am the son of Thy handmaid or bought with
Thy mercy,—whatever plea I can urge, oh let nothing keep me
in a state of separation from Thee. Hast Thou not sent Thy
Son to seek and to save vile, hell-deserving sinners, ready to
perish, such as I am ? Therefore save me, I implore Thee.
Behold, O God my, shield and sacrifice ; look upon the face of
Thine own Anointed. Thy propitiation is infinitely sufficient
and valuable. For the sake of His atonement and meritorious
righteousness may I be accepted in the Beloved.

O Lord, Thy children "are not redeemed with corruptible
things as silver and gold from their vain conversation, but
with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blem-
ish and without spot." O give me to know that I am so
ransomed. O for the continued witness of Thy Spirit to bear
testimony with my spirit that I am a child of God. Make me
at last "a babe in Christ." Adored be Thy name, the sins of
even the "little children" are forgiven from the hour of their
new birth by the Spirit of Jesus. May this beginning of all
spiritual and heavenly blessings in the soul be mine. May
my sins be forgiven. May I be able to rejoice evermore

and pray without ceasing, until prayer in the world that now is be merged in the praise of "the world to come."

Bless and be with me this day. I thank Thee for the goodness and mercy of the past night and this morning. Enable me faithfully to discharge every duty. If it be Thy holy will, may I have favour and good understanding in the sight of man as well as in Thy sight, O God. Bless my associates and all who sail with me. Bless those at home whom I love. Bless with increase of grace and comfort Thy people everywhere. Have compassion upon a perishing world. All that I ask is in the name of my Only Saviour. Amen.

THIRD DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Sing Psalm 11, 3.

Read Galatians, Chap. 6.

With profoundest reverence, O Lord, do I now seek to prostrate myself at the footstool of Thy Throne. How excellent and adorable art Thou, the infinite fountain of all good! In Thy presence all Heaven falls prostrate; all holy angels and blessed spirits, all cherubim and seraphim, all orders, principalities and powers worship Thee. In this they delight, by this they are exalted—becoming men like the God whom they worship and love; they thus drink of the river of the pleasures which make glad the city of Jehovah. They never grow weary of inhaling the sweet odour of that atmosphere that continually reminds them of Thyself, the source of all happiness and honour.

Lord, what am I that Thou permittest, nay dost most graciously encourage me to draw nigh unto Thee? Glory be to the God of sovereign grace, who hath revealed His Son as the Great High Priest interceding on behalf of poor, guilty, repentant and suppliant sinners. How precious is that counsel of Thine which teaches the abased transgressor to flee for refuge to the Hope set before him in the Gospel! Adored be Thy name, the terrors of wrath that were ready to descend upon him shall never come near him. In Jesus Christ the Righteous he finds "the propitiation for his sins," his "Ad-

vocate" with the Father, his "Hiding place" from the storm, and his conformity with Thy holy law.

O God, may I be among the number of those who are enabled to appropriate the consolations of such blissful truth. May I in reality be Christ's. Suffer me not to deceive myself with a name to live while yet I am spiritually dead. Let me not think myself to be a member of Christ if I am "nothing" in Him. I would examine myself whether I be in the Faith. I know that I shall stand at the judgement-seat of "the Son of Man", and that He as the unerring Witness and Judge, will recompense me according to the deeds done in the body. O forbid that I should then have to bear the burden of my sin and guilt. Rather, I most earnestly beseech Thee, grant that I may now know what it is to "groan being burdened," so that I may personally and for myself obtain deliverance in my Crucified Redeemer.

Give me, Thou Giver of all good, the Spirit of Jesus. May the same mind be in me that was in Him. Truly I think I love all those who are His members for their love and likeness to Him. May the law of brotherly kindness and charity be in manifest operation in the followers of the Lamb. May they bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of their exalted Head. As I have opportunity, enable me to "do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

O make me, Heavenly Father, conscientiously devout and diligent. Pardon the sins and short-comings of the past day. May every new day, that it may please Thee to add to my life on earth, find me growing in grace and improving in all things. May I never lose sight of the Rock,—the Foundation upon which I am built. May I be a lively stone of that glorious spiritual fabric which Messiah is now erecting upon the basis of His own merits and finished work. May I never forget that this work is all of grace, and that Immanuel "shall bring both the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto all."* To Him with the Father and the Eternal Spirit be all the glory for ever. I would say

* Zecharich 4, 7.

with the holy Apostle—"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

May the children of Zion walk worthy of their King. May the time, the set time to favour Zion, soon be fully come. Respect Thy children, O Lord, with increase of grace and great accessions to their number. May many be turned unto righteousness.

Shepherd of Israel, I commit myself to Thy keeping this night. Do Thou for me exceeding abundantly above all that I am able to ask or think for Jesus' sake. Amen.

FOURTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Psalms 9 and 10.

"I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart ; I will shew forth all Thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in Thee. I will sing praise to Thy name, O Thou most High." A new morning with its mercies, the rest, refreshment, safety, health, and comfort of the past night,—all Thy goodness and loving-kindness call upon me to praise Thee.

When I remember my past life,—the days of childhood and youth, my provocations and aggravated sins, how marvellous, O Lord, are Thy forbearance and long-suffering patience ! I am deeply humbled and awed by considering Thy wonderful compassion and tenderness to me, a wayward and hell-deserving sinner.

O God of sovereign grace, may I now praise Thee as the Author of life everlasting to my soul. I trust that Thou art separating me from my former sins and making me to differ from my former self and from the ungodly in the world. Praised be that Gracious Redeemer who hath made me a partaker of Divine life. By Thy unmerited love I have been taken while many have been left. Praised be the Spirit of quickening and sanctification who hath begun and is carrying on in me the renovation of the whole man.

With cheerfulness and trust in Thee, O God, may I deny myself, take up the Cross, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. May I realise the instincts, feelings, tendencies,

desires, aspirations, sentiments, joys, sorrows, principles and the whole character of a new creature in Christ Jesus. I am now sailing upon the troubled waters of the Ocean, I am also accomplishing the imperilled voyage of mortal life. Be Thou, O Jesus, beloved of my soul, my Pilot, Captain, Guide, Guardian, Saviour and Master—my all and in all.

Omniscient Jehovah, Thou knowest my trials and weakness. When assailed by ridicule, malignity, and reproach, O may I never be ashamed of Jesus. May I endure as seeing Him who is invisible. I know, my Saviour, that I cannot be Thy disciple unless I prefer Thee to father and mother, sister and brother, nearest kindred and dearest friend, yea, to my own life. And I know that all, who will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. O make me faithful and true. Without Thee, Divine Master, I am nothing and can do nothing as a child of God. In the hour of temptation, and under the assault of the wicked, I feel as if I could say, "Why standest Thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest Thou Thyself in times of trouble?" O Thou, who art "Alpha and Omega, and the bright and morning star," be a very present and a very gracious help unto me in the day of trial, that I may fight the good fight of faith and lay hold upon eternal life. May I overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

O Righteous and Merciful God, have compassion upon multitudes who are now living without Thee and sinning away the season of flying from hell and rising to Heaven. "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." O that a spirit of salutary and timely alarm might take hold of their minds. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" O Thou who turnest the rivers of waters whithersoever Thou pleassest, turn Thou them and they shall be turned. In Jesus may they find pardon, reconciliation, and everlasting life.

Be with me this day. Bless my fellow-voyagers, superiors, inferiors, and equals. Reward my friends and benefactors,

forgive and save my enemies. Soothe the sorrowful, comfort the afflicted, and prepare the dying for eternity. Graciously accept of me through Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOURTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read John, Chap. 16.

O Thou, that hearest the prayer of the humble and contrite sinner, be pleased to bend a gracious ear to the voice of my supplications and thanksgivings. For all Thy blessings I praise Thee, for the health and safety of the men, for the prosperity which thou art vouchsafing to our voyage; and for the happiness and peace which I individually enjoy I give thanks unto Thee.

While I praise Thee, Heavenly Father, for life and all its blessings, I desire especially and above all to praise Thee for Jesus Christ, Thine unspeakable Gift. To His intercession I am indebted for the presence and influences of the Spirit of grace, for the faith that overcometh the world, for the love which I feel to Thee and to what is good, and for the hope of a futurity of perfect and eternal bliss.

O Thou, Adorable Saviour, I can understand something of the great attachment evinced by Thy first disciples to Thy personal presence. I can sympathise with Thy followers who long and watch for Thy coming again. O may I be ever making myself ready for meeting Thee when time to me shall have terminated. Bestow upon me in large effusion of thy Holy Spirit. Make me like unto Thyself.

Lord of the Sabbath day, I pray for preparation to improve the Sabbath rest. In Thy kind providence I have been preserved from accident, sickness, and death, through the night-watches and days, and through all the incidents of the closing week. I have participated largely of Thy benefits. Mercifully accept of my humble and heartfelt acknowledgments.

Bless to all on board the solemnities and hallowing associations of the Day of sacredness. How admirable is its institution. May we remember it to keep it holy. Bless abundantly Thy servants who labour in holy things throughout the

world. Bless Thy people ; visit and respect Thine heritage which is weary. Gather in very many perishing sinners to the fold of the Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Thou hast spared me, Heavenly Father, to see the last night of the week. O pardon all my sins. Pardon the sins that I have committed during the progress of the week. Pardon those of which I have been guilty since we left the land and come to sea. May the future, if it be Thy will to add to my days, be better than the past. May I henceforth "walk with God" holily and acceptably. "Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only-Wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

FIRST SABBATH,

MORNING PRAYER, FIFTH DAY.

Read Psalms 100 and 95.

O Thou who art the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, enable me now to draw nigh unto Thee by prayer and thanksgiving. The universe is Thy glorious temple, all worlds are Thy property, all the beings whom Thou hast endowed with life are Thy subjects. Thou art Jehovah, the God of Heaven who hath made the sea and the dry land. In Thy hands are the deep places of the earth and the strength of the hills is Thine. Thou art the Author and Upholder of all things visible and invisible.

O God, I adore and praise Thee that, as a creature and especially as a ransomed creature in Christ Jesus, I can say unto Thee, *my God*. Blessed be Thy great name, amidst the grandeur of creation Thou despisest me not, and never overlookest me. By the Spirit of regeneration and adoption I am enabled in a most grateful and loving sense to address Thee as *my Father*. O Lord, Thou art the great Sovereign who rulest in all parts of Thy boundless dominions, governing by Thy wisdom, power, and goodness, all Thy creatures and all their actions. I now draw nigh to worship and bow down. I kneel before the Lord my Maker.

I appear before Thee, Heavenly Father, confessing and mourning over my sins. I acknowledge in the sincerity of my soul, that they are more than can be numbered, and that

they are highly aggravated. Though "a son honoureth his father and a servant his master," yet I, who by the very constitution of my existence am Thy son and Thy servant, have dishonoured Thee in times and ways innumerable. I have not feared the Lord and departed from evil as I ought to have done. I have been guilty of the great sin of not loving Thee supremely,—Thee whom all holy angels and the spirits of the just made perfect love, as infinitely worthy of their best and ceaseless affection. I have been ungrateful to Thee, who in Thy Paternal Providence hast been my constant and unwearied Benefactor. "Yet, O Lord most Merciful, O God most Holy," it is from Thee alone, against whom I have done all this evil, that I can receive pardon and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. For the sake of that Only and Well-Beloved Son whom Thou gavest as a Ransom for sinners and whom Thou hearest always, look down upon me in Thine infinite compassion, blot out all my sins, and visit me with Thy most gracious favour. Produce and deepen in me true repentance towards Thyself—the God against whom I have sinned, and grant me grace with the heart to believe with a simple, a holy, and an enlightened faith in Jesus as my Lord and my Saviour.

I praise Thee, God of all grace, for the appointment of one day in seven to be a holy Sabbath unto Thyself. Thy manifold wisdom and Thy abounding goodness are beautifully manifested in this sacred ordinance. I thank Thee for its separation from secular and week-day duties. O keep me from profaning the day by idleness or any other sinful indulgence. As the Sabbatism that remaineth for Thy people hereafter will be rest without a rest, so may I, during the hours of Thy Sabbath upon earth, rest from earthly cares and thoughts and business, and diligently improve them in cultivating spiritual improvement and a meetness for Thy kingdom of glory. Pour down upon me richly of Thy Spirit. May He manifest His presence and influences in my prayerfulness, study of Thy Holy Word, improvement of the opportunities afforded me in Thy Providence, in devout thoughts, humble and Christian resolutions to strive in the strength of the Lord against all sin, and to aim at advancement in all goodness.

Bless, I earnestly beseech Thee, Heavenly Father, all my relations and friends. May they all be brought to the knowledge and love of the Truth as it is in Jesus. I would fervently supplicate that Thy blessings may descend upon my brother-seamen. May many, many of them become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Born again by His quickening Spirit, may they experience the felicity of the forgiveness of sins and union with Thy Dear Son. May He be made of Thee unto them "wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." Alas, Lord, we have been to a dreadful extent curses to one another, and to the lands and people whom we have visited ! O may we henceforth labour to become blessings to all among whom we may be called to tabernacle for a brief space of time. May we in some sense become the messengers of Christ, carrying with us the knowledge and the savour of His Glorious Gospel wherever we go. O that we were living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men.

Father of mercies and God of grace, be with me throughout this Lord's day to the beginning of which Thou hast kept me by Thy merciful Guardianship. By its hallowing influences may I be fitted both for the better discharge of my duties on earth, and for entering into the world of Heavenly happiness hereafter. Be pleased graciously to listen to my supplications and to accept of me through the merits of Thy Only Son. Amen.

FIRST SABBATH,

EVENING PRAYER, FIFTH DAY.

Read Isaiah, Chap. 42.—2nd Corinthians, Chap. 5.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High : to show forth Thy loving-kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night."*

I would again, with solemn reverence and joy approach into Thy presence, O Merciful Father. Look upon me in the face of Thine Anointed Son. In Him Thou beholdest no iniquity.

* Psalm 92, 1.

uity in Jacob and no perverseness in Israel. In Him Thou art ever well pleased. For His sake blot out all my sins, and sanctify me wholly in soul, body, and spirit.

Be pleased to accept of my thanksgiving for the goodness which Thou hast made to pass before me this day. May the exercises in which I have been engaged be productive of lasting benefit to my soul. May the tendency and the result of the employments of this day be increased holiness. Make me holy as Thou, O my Father in Heaven, art holy. May the worship and the instruction of the Lord's day tell beneficially upon my heart and conduct during all the days of the week.

Bless, Almighty God, our ship's company. May master, officers, and men,—may all be made partakers of Divine life. May the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus animate them all. Thou knowest the peculiar temptations of a seaman's life. Nevertheless, O Lord, it is thy wise and holy will that some should follow the sea as their vocation. As my companions and I are in Thy Providence among the number of those who are called to do business on the great waters, O Gracious Heavenly Parent, I entreat that Thou wouldest bless us with Thy salvation. May our souls live, prosper, and be in health.

Almighty God, my earnest prayer is that no iniquity may have dominion over me. Justify me freely by Thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ; free me from all unrighteousness by Thy Good Spirit; and enable me to perfect holiness in Thy fear.

Praised be the name of the Lord for the providential comforts with which we are favoured. We have largely participated in the blessings of Thy protection and favour. Hitherto hath the Lord helped and prospered us.* Inspire us all with lively gratitude to Thee who rulest in the raging of the sea and makest the storm a calm, who bringest the wind out of Thy treasures and rulest all the elements of nature. Teach

* Here the sentiment should vary according to the wind and weather experienced by the mariner. If contrary winds and unfavourable weather be prevalent, submission, cheerful submission should be expressed and grace sought that all may be spiritually profitable.

us to trust in Thee at all times with humble and believing confidence.

Bless, Heavenly Father, those whom I specially love. May they be Thine in the covenant of Thy love. Though required to separate from time to time, while accomplishing the voyage of mortality, may they and I be so truly knit together in Christ as members of His mystical body that we shall for ever be reunited after separation by providence and by death when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

Bless our country and our Queen, her Majesty's Royal Consort, the Prince of Wales, and all that belong to that illustrious family. Set the great and the good, able men who fear God, love their country, and hate covetousness, in the high places of the land. May Sovereign and Rulers serve the Lord with trembling joy. May those under authority render to all dues, honour to whom honour should be rendered, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, owing no man any thing but loving one another. May our merchants be taught to consecrate their treasures to God. May the merchandise and hire of our nation be "holiness to the Lord." May our mariners seek to serve and honour Thee. And may they be made honoured instruments of spreading the knowledge of the Lord to them that are far off and to them that are nigh, until it cover the earth as the waters cover the channel of the great deep. May the distant islands of the sea rejoice with those who traverse the ocean to know the glad tidings of Salvation through a sacrificed and risen Saviour. May Ethiopia soon stretch out her hand unto God, "yea, let these inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."*

And now, Holy Father, with profoundest reverence I commit me to Thy Divine guardianship and keeping this night. I would stand in awe and sin not, I would commune with my own heart upon my bed, and be still. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep, for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."† Glory be

* Isaiah 42, 11.

† Psalm 4, 7, 8.

to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

SIXTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Sing Psalm 26, 1.

Read Psalm 107.

I would come before Thee, Gracious God, with the voice of thanksgiving and praise. How great is Thy goodness towards me. I laid me down and slept, I have arisen in comfort and safety because Thou sustainest me. Thou art bestowing upon me health, the greatest of earthly blessings. Thou multipliest unto me the bounties of Thy Providence ; Thou art in Thy sovereign grace causing me to participate in the renovation and felicity of the Everlasting Covenant. Thou even now art giving me all things needful for life and godliness.

O Lord, may I be enabled to render unto Thee according to the benefits conferred upon me. May the goodness of my Lord lead me to renewed and deepened repentance. I ardently desire to praise Thee in the land of the living, to praise Thee by my life, to praise Thee by my Christian conduct among my fellows, to praise Thee at sea and on shore, to praise Thee while I live in this world until I shall be able to praise Thee better in the world to come.

I reflect with gratitude, Heavenly Father, upon the advantages and opportunities of the past Sabbath. May the exercises in which I was then privileged to engage be attended with spiritual and permanent good to me. I love the Sacred Day, its appropriate employments and associations. May this be evidenced in my growing holiness.

I know, O Lord, that I have too great reason to distrust myself. I have an evil heart of unbelief by nature, and my experience often proves to me that it is not wholly eradicated. Yet, O Father, I hope that I have received from Thyself "a new heart and a right spirit." I ascribe glory unto Thee for the precious gift. Guide and preserve me from errors, evil, and ungodliness unto life everlasting. Make me able to say with Thy servant of old,—“I have walked in mine integrity ;

I have trusted also in the Lord : therefore I shall not slide. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me, try my reins and my heart. For Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes : and I have walked in Thy Truth.”*

“ Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.” I love the ordinances of Zion. O may the love of Christ ever constrain me to all devotedness unto Thee. O God, my Saviour and King, may I in Thy good providence be favoured at some suitable time to commemorate Thy death and dying love with Thy people at Thy holy table. May I be brought by the King into the banqueting-house and may His banner over me be love. May I be honoured with sacramental communion with the Head of the Church and with its members. Blessed Jesus, Thou didst love Thy Church and give Thyself for it that it might be a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. O increasingly do Thou bless it and build it up for ever. In Thy strength may I say—“ I will wash my hands in innocency : so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord.”

I have had opportunities, such as Thy Word so admirably describes, of seeing the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. Sanctify such observation and experience to my brother-sailors and myself. May we, when made partakers of Thy goodness, praise Thee, O Lord, for it and for Thy wonderful works to the children of men. May we exalt Thee in the congregation of the people and praise Thee in the assembly of the Lord.

I invoke Thy paternal and gracious presence this day to be with me. May I glorify Thee by a conversation becoming the Gospel. Bless abundantly all on board. If it please Thee, may our voyage be peaceful and prosperous. Bless those who are near and dear to me. May Jesus, our Master and Redeemer, ever be nearest and dearest to each of us. Gather in Thy children from every land and every sea to the company of Immanuel. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, shall be the glory, world without end. Amen.

* Psalms 26, 112.

SIXTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read John 10.

I adore Thee, Heavenly Father, as the Greatest and the Best of all Beings. Thou art the Creator, Proprietor, and Governor of the universe. "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season."*

O Thou, Infinite Jehovah, when in imagination I survey the innumerable worlds which Thou hast called into existence and made to roll in space, how grand, how surpassingly sublime is the contemplation! "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"†

Adored be Thy name, O Lord, Thou hast evinced the liveliest interest in the recovery and good of man. For this Thou sparedst not Thine own Son. O the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus! It passeth knowledge. How unspeakably glorious is the Saviour of man! Thou hast made Him "the Head over all things to the Church." Even the angelic hosts of Heaven worship and serve Him. They behold Him with admiration, ever desiring to see more of the unfathomable mystery of Redeeming love. From Him they derive inestimable personal benefit. They delight to be sent forth by Him in the accomplishment of His Divine work. O God, may the Truth be sanctifying and exhilarating to my soul. After Thy Son was proved to be the Messiah, Thou didst "set Him at Thine own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name

* Psalm 104, 20.

† Psalm 8, 3, 4.

that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hast put all things under His feet."

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." May the "Good Shepherd" enable me warrantably so to speak. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." O may the death of the Shepherd of Israel be my life. As the sheep know His voice and follow Him, so may I. May I refuse to follow the stranger and the enemy. May Thy precepts be the rule of my life. Deliver me from the way of evil men and from the man that speaketh froward things. May I be sound in faith and ever be increasing in true holiness.

Blessed Redeemer, be thou the guide of my youth and the delight of my riper years. Preserve me from temptations. Keep me "from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For her house inclineth unto death and her paths unto the dead."* May I walk in the integrity of my soul, in purity of heart, and in nearness to God. Protect me from the contaminations of all enemies. In love, reverence, and humble confidence I would say unto thee,—"My Beloved is mine and I am His."

With these aspirations, Heavenly Father, I commit my soul with all my anxieties and mortal interests to Thy holy care this night. I thank Thee for the goodness and mercy which Thou hast made to pass before me during the past day. My kindred and friends I commend to Thy friendship and adoption. Bless the seed of Abraham, Thy friend, with the true faith of Abraham. Gather in the Gentile nations to the Church of Christ. Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Psalms 19 and 20.

Almighty and most Merciful Father, I would now come unto Thee in deep prostration of spirit. I rejoice in thee as a very present help in the time of trouble. Solemnized,

* Proverbs 2, 12.

anxious, and contrite, I would also approach with the voice of thanksgiving and praise. Gratefully do I acknowledge that I am indebted to Thee for my life and all the blessings of life. From Thee flow all the comfort and hope that are mine. I rejoice in Jehovah who keepeth Israel, who slumbereth not nor sleepeth. O Lord, when I laid me down to sleep, I committed unto Thee the keeping of my soul and body. Praised be thy name Thou hast sustained me in safety and health. "When I awake I am still with Thee."

I entreat Thee, O Father, to work in me mightily by Thy good Spirit, that I may ever confide in Thee amidst all the trials and tossings of this passing state. May the King of Zion graciously look on me. May the repentant sinners' Advocate, "Jesus Christ the Righteous,"—"the propitiation for our sins," be my Advocate. In the reading of Thy Word may I hear the voice of Jesus as "the voice of my Beloved." By faith may I realise my Great High Priest interceding on my behalf who am a poor, sinful suppliant. May I be enabled to appropriate that word of consolation,—“The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion. Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.”*

Defend me this day, O Lord, from all the snares and temptations to which I am exposed. Enable me to cherish a cordial affection for my shipmates, to be cheerful and obliging in my demeanour, to be dutiful, respectful and conscientious as respects my superiors. If any of them sin, O may I deliver my soul. May I mildly yet decidedly decline to join in offending Thee. When called to express disapprobation, may I do it with meekness, love, and wisdom. When required to suffer for Christ's sake, for verily the offence of the Cross hath not ceased, may I account the reproach that fidelity to my Lord may draw upon me greater riches than all the smiles and the gains of earth. O that Thou wouldest make me a

blessing to all on board. O grant in Thine own way salvation to my unsaved companions.

Most Gracious God, I beseech Thee to bless with pardon of sin and spiritual renovation my endeared relatives and friends.* For their love to me, and all their interest in me O do Thou reward them. For their kindness I praise Thee, Thou God and Giver of all Good. May their affection be renewed a hundred fold into their own bosom. Most especially I pray, make them partakers of Life Everlasting. May they be alive unto God. May the life that they now live in the flesh be by the faith of the Son of God.

I pray for the extension of Messiah's Kingdom. May the glory of the Lord be revealed and all flesh see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. May the mariner, who traverses every ocean and visits every people, be the missionary and minister of highest good to them with whom he has intercourse. Alas ! how often is he now the victim and the agent of Satan ! Lord, may profligacy, intemperance, uncleanness, profaneness, and a multitude of sins be eradicated by Thy power and Thy Spirit. Clothed and in his right mind, may he sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of Him. And may his future life tell of how great things the Divine Physician hath done for him.

May this day, upon which I have in thy good providence entered, be redeemed by me. May I glorify Thee in all things. O hear and accept of me for my Redeemer's sake. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read John, Chap. 17.

Thou God and Father of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in His name do I now present myself before Thee. When I contemplate the work of human redemption, "God manifest in the flesh" and humbling Himself unto death, even the death of the Cross, I am lost in amazement. Well may the angels

* Hear the suppliant may specify, using his own language and with warm sincerity and simplicity giving expression to his feelings, any individual for whom he is especially concerned.

desire to look into this surpassingly astonishing achievement. Adorable Redeemer, Thy humiliation, obedience and sacrifice are marvellous beyond expression.

O Righteous Father, Thou God of love, Infinite and Everlasting, what shall I render to Thee for all Thy goodness ! Thanks be to God for His Unspeakable Gift. Enable me to present unto Thee, soul, body, and spirit as a most willing, an entire, and a consecrated sacrifice. May my devotion and love be ardent. This is the will of God, even my sanctification. O sanctify me wholly. Make me a vessel full of grace. May God the Holy Ghost dwell in me to the glory of Thy most unmerited favour and election.

May it please Thee, O Lamb of God, shortly to accomplish the number of Thy ransomed Church whose names are written in Thy Book of Life. Regard with Thy tender compassion those that travel by land and by water. Lead them in the way everlasting. Teach the mariner and the merchant to seek first and above all things else Thy kingdom and Thy honour. May my dear kindred and friends be Thine in the Covenant of Peace. Grant me this night the sleep of Thy beloved. May I awake to praise Thee. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION AFTER READING JOHN 17.

It is the eternal purpose of the Father "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."* Yet was the Cross the path-way to the Crown. With what intensity of desire did my Saviour look for the last Passover and its subsequent sufferings ! As the sailor, who must pass some dangerous rock or encounter some hazardous passage ere his loved home with its loved inmates can be reached, will long for the day when these dangers shall be met, so I behold my Lord and Master with the feelings of true

* Philippians 2, 10, 11.

humanity longing for the awful period of His final suffering. And, when it was come, He lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." How unutterably affecting is it to behold Him whom all angels adore, who is over all, God blessed for ever more, betaking Himself from the upper room in Jerusalem where He and His disciples had celebrated the last supper, passing along through the dense crowds that thronged the Holy City to the quiet of Mount Olivet and the retirement of Gethsemane's garden that he might enter upon His sorrow and agony! And was all this for guilty, wretched man? Yes, for such ruined and hell-deserving rebels as I belong to. O how wonderful! It was when in His way thither that, after discoursing to His disciples the words of Heavenly comfort and instruction recorded by His Spirit, He paused and offered up that most solemn and impressive of prayers which I have been reading. It is the intercessory prayer of my High Priest for His true followers then and in all succeeding time. O what a prayer! O God, He came to give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. May I be comprised in the number. "And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

EIGHTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Sing Psalm 23.

Read Psalms 23 and 24.

Upon this the morning of a new day would I draw nigh unto Thee, O God, with grateful homage. Thou humblest thyself to behold the things that are done in heaven and those that pertain to this lower world. Graciously condescend for the sake of my Glorious Ransomer to regard me with Thy favour.

O Thou Jehovah, whom I am permitted to call *my* God, yea *my* Father, the whole host of heaven praiseth Thee. The spirits of the just made perfect, who have finished their course and overcome by the blood of the Lamb, praise Thee. All the disciples of Jesus in this world of trial, those who are on shore

and those who are on sea, worship and praise Thee. O enable me, whom Thou hast in Thy sovereign mercy made to belong to this highly favoured company, now to engage in true and acceptable devotion.

The elements of nature, O Lord, praise Thee. Thou ridest in the whirlwind and guidest the storm. "Thou rulest the raging of the sea : when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them."* Thou art the Author, the Upholder and the Governor of universal nature. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the flood."† Thou hast given to the sea Thy decree that the waters should not pass Thy commandment. "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee."‡

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech Thee to make me an accepted worshipper in Thy courts on earth, that in Jerusalem above I may stand in Thy holy place. May the Mighty God of Jacob, who never will say to any of the seed of Jacob, "seek ye me in vain," be found of me. O have compassion upon me, subdue my iniquities, cast all my sins into the depths of the sea. Thou hast already, I trust, in Thy mercy, which is great above the heavens, made me to differ from unregenerate man. All praise and glory be to that God whose love is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him. May Thy grace in me not be in vain. May I not only differ from many around me, may I differ daily more and more from what I naturally am.

What shall I render unto Thee, O most Blessed Redeemer, for Thy ransoming love to me a poor sinner ! Thy love towards me was stronger than death, many waters could not quench it, neither could the floods drown it. Thou didst love me with an everlasting love. Thou didst draw me with cords of a man, with bands of love. O that I were walking worthy of such undeserved goodness ! Pardon my sins and

* Psalm 89, 9.

† Psalm 24, 112.

‡ Psalm 145, 10.

my unfruitfulness. Teach me to honour and glorify Thee in all things. Make me wise unto salvation and wise to win souls.

God of all goodness, be pleased to bless the master of our ship and all with whom I am sailing. May they be Thine in Christ. Bless all the fold of "the Good Shepherd" with increase of grace. May they with whom I am connected by the ties of nature or mutual love be of the household of faith. O look in mercy upon sinners ready to perish. May Thy presence and Thy Spirit go with me at all times. May I fear before Thee all the day. And may I find in my happy experience, that day after day I am attaining a meetness for that celestial state where perpetual day reigns, where there is no night, and where the inhabitants never weary in their felicity and enjoyment. All this I humbly ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

EIGHTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read 1st Peter, Chap. 4th.

O Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth. ! Thou hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Yet adored be the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, it hast pleased Thee out of the mouth of babes and sucklings to perfect praise. Whilst Thou hidest the mysteries of everlasting love from the wise and prudent, Thou revealest them to every one that is humble and contrite, that trembleth at Thy Word, and seeketh as a little child to enter into Thy kingdom.

O Jehovah Jesus, Thy disciples are composed of those in whom there is this spirit of humility, self-abasement, and submission to Thee. To such are the consolations and promises of Thy grace addressed. O associate me with this class. By Thy unmerited love and life-giving Spirit, be pleased to include me in their happy number. O Spirit of the Lord, accomplish in me the convictions, manifest unto me the truths of Salvation, and shed abroad in my heart that love of God—which are all marks of the believer in whom Thou dwellest. Teach me to pray, and intercede for me "with groanings that cannot be uttered."

O Lord, my Heavenly Father, I have sinned and done iniquity in Thy sight. All my transgressions have been against Thee. Yea, against Thee, Thee only have I sinned. O enter not into judgement against me. I could not answer Thee for one of unnumbered thousands of my sins. My own conscience tells me that I am guilty, Thy holy law condemns me, and Satan joins against me as an accuser. This great enemy of my soul seems to insinuate that, seeing I have so provoked Thee in childhood, youth, and manhood, Thou wilt be to me a God of retribution and not a God of pardoning love, blotting out in everlasting oblivion all my sins. I feel as if He brought up continually my pollutions before me. When tried by difficulties, by the treatment or slights of men, He appears to suggest that these are not the discipline and loving chastisements of a Redeeming and Covenant God, but the award of an angry Judge who hath forgotten to be gracious. And, when I call to mind how unworthy a servant I have been, how I have dishonoured Thee ever since I knew the Truth and embraced Thy Son, O I am deeply, Thou knowest how deeply I am cast down. But, O Lord most Merciful, O God most Holy, O Righteous Father, hast Thou not Thyself made me a partaker of that faith which believes that the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanseth from all sin? O then give me the comfort and happiness of this holy faith working by love, purifying the heart and overcoming the world. Give me peace in believing. Justified freely by Thy grace through the Redemption that is in Christ, may a sense of pardon and of the light of Thy reconciled countenance lifted up upon me enable me to rejoice with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Henceforth, O God, may I abide under the shadow of Thy wings. May I have the assurance of Thy love. May I walk in growing holiness. And finally may I be admitted to the house of many mansions which my Redeemer hath gone before to prepare for his Church and children. May this also be the portion of those beloved ones who are very dear to me and of all for whom I ought to pray. I now commit me to Thy Divine guardianship this night. Never leave, nor forsake me, be my God and guide while I live, my confidence

at the hour of death, and my eternal portion when time to me shall have terminated, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

NINTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Sing Psalm 15.

Read Isaiah, 35th Chap.

Almighty and ever Blessed God, with profoundest reverence would I now approach the footstool of Thy throne and invoke in the name of my Glorious Mediator and Intercessor Christ Jesus, the outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit. Most ardently do I desire to be holy as Thou art holy. Thy will revealed is that Thy children be holy as their Father in Heaven is holy. O may the felicity be mine of reaching this grand attainment. For this purpose may the Spirit of thy Son dwell in me, working in me all the good pleasure of thy goodness. May I be "filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God."

O Lord, grant unto me the character of the man "that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart, that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour: in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord."* O fulfil in my happy experience what it is to be thus conformed to thy law. May the image of Christ be formed in me. Blessed Saviour, by the power of Thy Spirit Thou canst cause even me, poor and guilty as I am, to reflect it. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may I be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

May the model of goodness, as delineated in the Holy Scriptures and embodied in the person of the man Christ Jesus, be copied by a mighty multitude whom no man can number. O how spirit-stirring—how exhilarating to anticipate even the coming to Zion of this ransomed throng,—the sons and the daughters of the Lord Almighty, with songs and everlasting

* Psalm 15, 1, 4.

rejoicings ! Adored be Father for His pledge to the Son, —“Thy people shall be killing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning.”*

O God, my earnest prayer is that many of this “willing people” may be brought from among those who “go down to the sea in ships.” Bless for this purpose the Christian exertions that are put forth for the temporal and eternal good of seamen. May prayer be practised among them and profaneness be repulsed off with Godly sorrow. May they be delivered from uncleanness, intemperance, Sabbath-breaking, and all unrighteousness. May purity, chastity, sobriety, the sanctification of the Lord’s Day, and whatsoever things are just, true, honest, charitable, generous, lovely, of good report, be strenuously aimed at and by Thy all-sufficient grace realised.

Bless Thy poor servant this day, O Lord. Be with me all the day long. Accept of my hearty thanksgiving for the peace, and preservation of the past night and this morning. Guide me by Thy counsel while I live and afterwards receive me to Thy glory with all Thy ransomed children through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

NINTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read John, 18 and 19 Chaps.

Ever Blessed and most Holy Lord God, I adore Thee who art just, true, and merciful. I behold Thee in Jesus as the Just God whilst Thou art mindful of Thy covenant and the Saviour of guilty man. How affecting is the record of what my Substitute suffered when he offered Himself a sacrifice for sinners ! Eternal glory be ascribed to the Father of Salvation and to the Lamb that was slain, who as the Surety of His people failed not to pay the full ransom-price of their Redemption and to drink to the dregs the cup of wrath which their sins had merited. May that “blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel” be applied to me by God the Holy Ghost.

* Psalm 110, 3.

O may I indeed belong to that holy Church of blood-washed, Spirit-sanctified members who are one with and in Christ. Lord, enable them to exhibit the unity of the living, mystical body. May peace and love reign in their hearts. Praised be their adorable Head, their unity will ever be maintained as was that of this seamless, symbolical coat. O may this unity be increasingly cherished and its beautiful compactness illustrated.

Accept, Heavenly Parent, of my heart's gratitude for Thy providential goodness throughout the past day. Thou art preserving us in health and prospering us in the way we go. Thou art animating us by Thy kindness in speeding us on our voyage. Thou art keeping us in perfect safety. Thou art multiplying Thy blessings unto us. To Thy great Name be glory and praise.

Bless and keep as the apple of Thine eye all who are especially dear to me. Bring them with all Thine elect children and Thy unworthy suppliant to life everlasting through the merits of our Redeemer. Amen.

A MEDITATION ON READING JOHN 18 AND 19.

How unspeakably grand are the scenes whose enactments are here registered! I behold Him in whom the Father delighted, the Man of His counsel,—Him whom legions of angels would have rescued, had He sought or suffered them to do so; I see Him betrayed by the perfidy of a professed friend and follower, arrested and seized by His enemies under cover of night, conducted by a ruthless band to the palace of the high priest and thence to Pilate's judgement-hall. In the next act of this most dreadful tragedy the Son of God is seen "scourged" by an unprincipled and unjust judge, insulted by an infuriate rabble, mocked, buffeted, spit upon, smitten by the hands of a profane soldier, at length condemned by the unrighteous administrator of law, suspended upon the accursed tree where in addition to the sufferings in the garden during three terrific hours of darkness He endured the agony of the wrath and curse of God by whom he was "forsaken" for a time, and finally closing his eyes in death.

Yet even in death faith discovers the sufferer victorious. By death He vanquished all His and His people's enemies. "For-as-much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."*

I admire the minute narration of the disciple whom Jesus loved. He shows the fulfilment of Prophetic Scripture in the death of his Lord ! How wonderful are the ways of God ! I see a delightful illustration in the open, courageous, and loving avowal and respect rendered by Joseph and Nicodemus in the burial of Christ. How honourable are these good men in their pious conduct ! May God bless their noble example to me and many, many more.

TENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Read Psalm 25.

I desire, Almighty and Everlasting God, to come unto Thee this morning with most solemn reverence and humility. I praise Thee that Thou hast sustained me throughout the hours of darkness and sleep. Thou keepest us in safety amidst the perils of the deep. Vouchsafe, Lord, to keep me this day from sin. Enable me now to worship Thee in spirit and in truth, in faith and love. May my sacrifice be that of a contrite spirit trembling at Thy Word. And may it be graciously accepted through the merits of my Redeemer.

"Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in Thee." May the Spirit of love dwell in me. May my mind be sound in its views and operations. May my communion be with Thee the Father and with Thy Son Christ Jesus. May I be fully possessed with humble and believing confidence in Thee. Give me to know that Thou art not angry with me, that Thou art pacified towards me. Thou art in Christ reconciling a guilty world unto Thyself, not imputing

* Hebrews 2, 14, 15.

unto men their trespasses. O Lord, I confide in Thee as a God of mercy. I trust in the all-cleansing blood of the Lamb that was slain.

I acknowledge, O Lord, that in my daily progress through life I continually contract defilement. Adored be the God of mercy and grace, I am encouraged and commanded to wash again in the Blood of Atonement. "He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."* Wash thou me, O Lord, and I shall be clean indeed.

Heavenly Father, the sins of my youth and of my riper years frequently come before the vision of my mind, the iniquities of my days of unregeneracy and my oft unworthy conduct even since Thy Spirit hath quickened me:—all seem to rise up against me as pleading for my condemnation. O Father, whatever chastisement it may please Thee to visit upon me, correct me not in wrath, but in love, O Thou tenderest and wisest of Parents. Blessed be Thy name, the Atonement is infinitely adequate for my guilt. Take away then all my sins. Make my repentance more thorough, so that temptation may not overcome me. May my faith be simple and strong, may my obedience be loving, consistent, and progressive.

Be pleased to bestow the blessings of the Covenant of Thy Love upon those whom I in particular love. Have mercy upon mankind. Establish Thy people in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. And the glory shall be Thine, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION ON READING PSALM 25.

Verse 2. The child of God here manifests saving and appropriating faith. "O my God, I trust in Thee, let me not be ashamed." Here is the confiding love of faith. Here is the spirit of adoption—"my God." We should fervently and untiringly seek for this temper and spirit. We should, if by grace we have attained it in any degree, cultivate it more and more. We should fear losing it in all the fulness of its con-

* John 13, 10.

solation. We incur this danger by grieving the Holy Spirit. Carelessness, neglect, coldness, formality, and the prevalence of the carnal mind—all oppose the indwelling and influences of the Spirit.

Verse 14. "The secret of the Lord," here spoken of, implies a clear and correct knowledge of the saving truths of the Gospel such as they only who fear the Lord and are spiritually minded ever experience. The love of God reigns in the heart. His love is manifested to the soul. "For the froward is abomination to the Lord : but His secret is with the righteous."* Such persons obtain increasing conviction and satisfaction respecting the truth of Christ (John 7, 17). They are made to participate more and more of the Holy Ghost. Further "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him" as to their own election. What a source of unspeakable comfort is sometimes afforded to the child of God by this doctrine, when otherwise desolation and sadness would pervade the soul. The knowledge of the believer becomes a sort of natural instinctive perception of what is holy and what is not. The confirmed Christian has the testimony of God's Spirit witnessing with his own spirit that he is a child of God. (Romans 8. 16, Ephesians 1. 9, 18, Revelation, 2. 17.

TENTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Sing Psalm 146.

Read Acts, Chap. 3rd.

Most Merciful Heavenly Father, I would now come before Thee to praise Thy name and supplicate blessings through Jesus my Mediator and Intercessor. All Thy works praise Thee. "Praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live praise the Lord, I will sing praises unto God while I have any being."†

O God of Jacob, may the happiness and the hope be mine of the man who hath Thee for his help. Thou art the Maker of

* Proverbs 3, 22.

† Psalm 146, 2.

all things visible and invisible. Thou keepest truth for ever. For the sake of the Divine Angel of the covenant hear my prayer. May I as one of the seed of Jacob prevail in prayer. May the Angel that blessed and redeemed Jacob bless and save me.

May I be one of the spiritual children of the father of the faithful. May I be strong in that faith which Abraham exercised when he was made heir of the righteousness of faith.

May Thine ancient people soon be convinced that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hath glorified His Son Jesus. May they see in the crucified Nazarene the Messiah promised unto the fathers. And may they repent and be converted that their sins may be blotted out. Together with all Israel may the fulness of the Gentiles be speedily brought in. Bless all Christian and prayerful exertions that are used for this purpose. Bless the enterprises and the labourers. May the time, the set time to favour Zion, soon be fully come.

O Thou who hast given me to be united to Thy ransomed Israel, accept of my devotion. Blot out my innumerable sins. If it be Thy will to lengthen my days of life, O may the future be holier than the past. Into Thy keeping I commend me. May I be visited with refreshing and invigorating repose. May a devout influence rest upon me when I sleep and when I awake. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer." Amen.

ELEVENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Psalms 29 and 30.

O God, I adore Thee as the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible,—“God only wise.” Thou art great, and greatly to be praised, Thou art to be feared above all that have sway or sovereignty on earth. “Honour and majesty are before Thee, strength and beauty are in Thy Sanctuary. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof.”*

* Psalm 96, 6, 11.

I remember, O Jehovah, with awe and admiration that, though Thou art High, Thou hast respect unto the lowly. Though Thou inhabitest eternity's praises, and dwellest in the High and Holy Place, Thou condescendest to dwell also with "every one that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." O how affecting is this goodness of God to fallen man! Though Thou art worshipped, served, and glorified by the unfallen and loftiest of created beings with all their pure affections and supernal intelligence, yet dost Thou, O Best of Parents, humble Thyself to come nigh to and bless the unworthy children of men. Love and tenderness, compassion and forbearance characterise all Thy procedure towards repentant, returning man. To bring him into this state and the blessedness of which it is the precursor, Thou didst not spare Thy Son,—Thine Only Son whom Thou lovedst, but didst deliver Him up to the death for us all. What majesty, mercy, and love Divine are conspicuous in the mission of the Incarnate Saviour. Eternal glory be ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the God of our salvation.

Heavenly Father, may the Spirit promised by Jesus be poured down upon me. His indwelling and influences have been experienced by many a sinner rescued from perishing and made an heir of the Heavenly inheritance. May He dwell in me and walk with me. Thou hast taught me that He despises not neither abhors the clay tabernacle of man's body, but sanctifies it as His temple that the soul may as a holy priest offer unto the Lord devout and acceptable sacrifices. May I know this experimentally. May the Spirit of Jesus reveal to me more and more Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

I thank Thee, Giver of all good, that Thou hast refreshed me with healthful and comfortable sleep. Thou hast enabled me to open my eyes upon the light and happiness of a new day. Thou art very gracious and full of pity to me. I might have been visited as was Thy afflicted servant of old, who said, "So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed unto me. When I lie down, I say, when shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am

full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day."* How different has it been with me ! And yet how incomparably was he a better and a holier man than I am ! Lord, make me most humble and grateful.

Be with me for good throughout the day. Bless abundantly all with whom I am associated. God of all grace, make them partakers of Divine life in their souls. May all profane speaking and evil words be done away with. May prayer and praise, proceeding from the new heart, be upon our lips. Turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Listen, Hearer of prayer, to these my pleadings and thanksgivings through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

ELEVENTH DAY.

EVENING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Luke, Chap. 13.

Unto Thee, O Lord, would I now draw nigh with sentiments of profoundest veneration, with feelings of awe, love, and adoration. In and through the merits of my Intercessor I have boldness to come into Thy immediate presence. Relying solely upon His Priestly and all-prevailing Advocacy, I prostrate myself at the footstool of Thy Throne. O enable me to appear before Thee with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, having my heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and my body washed with pure water.

How glorious art Thou, Almighty God, in the manifestations of Thy omnipotence and wisdom ! All nature proclaims Thy Divine Excellency. The grace and grandeur of Thy character are still more illustriously displayed in connection with the Mission of Thy Son to this sinful and rebel world. In Him I behold manifest and in harmony Thy justice and Thy mercy, Thy truth and Thy love, Thy holiness and Thy compassion.

I praise Thee, O Lord "for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all for Jesus Christ, Thine unspeakable Gift, for the means of grace, and for the

* Job 7, 3, 4.

hope of glory.* Accept, Gracious Father, of my thanksgiving for the goodness and mercy which Thou hast made to attend me throughout the past day and throughout the closing week. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the House of the Lord for ever."† Prepare me for the rest of the blessed Sabbath. May it be to me a delight, holy to the Lord, and honourable.

Unto Thee, my God, I now commend me. Watch over me in omnipotent love throughout the silence of night. May my people belong to Thy people. Multiply peace unto Israel. May the Kingdom of Christ be established in the world. May "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of all His Prophets since the world began," soon be manifested. And unto Thee, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be ascribed all might, majesty, praise and dominion, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

My circumstances as a sailor and my observation of the sea ought to help me to understand the sublime phraseology and poetry of "the Holy Scriptures" in reference to the elements of nature. "The Lord," says the prophet, "is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked; the Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers."‡ This Jehovah "hath gathered the wind in His fists," He "hath established all the ends of the earth."§ "Thy way," says the devout Psalmist, "is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known."|| Let me join cordially in the rapturous address. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps. Fire and hail, snow, and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His

* Book of Common Prayer.

† Psalm 23, 6.

‡ Matthew 1, 3, 4.

§ Proverbs 30, 4.

|| Psalm 77, 4.

word. Both young men and maidens ; old men, and children ; Let them praise the name of the Lord ; for His name alone is excellent ; His glory is above the earth and heaven.* May I as a ransomed sinner be enabled to unite in the sacred melody.

SECOND SABBATH .

MORNING PRAYER, TWELFTH DAY.

Sing Psalms 5, 1, and 130, 1.

Read Genesis, 2nd Chap.

Almighty and Ever Blessed God, on this the morning of Thine own hallowed Day, would I draw nigh unto Thee with the voice of adoration and thanksgiving, of supplication and confession. This is the day which the Lord hath made and set apart for His own especial honour. This day commemorates the completion of Thy creative wisdom and goodness. Thou, O Great Parent of the universe, didst with perfect paternal love and kindness from the beginning establish and institute the sacredness of one day in seven by Thine own example. Thou didst bless the seventh day, and sanctify it ; because that in it Thou hadst rested from all Thy work which Thou hadst created and made. And this day commemorates a still greater achievement. It was upon the morning of this first day of the week that my Redeemer arose, a conqueror over death and the grave. It was upon the Lord's Day that my Saviour was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. Eternal glory be ascribed to the undivided Trinity for the finished work of man's redemption.

Accept of my grateful praise, O Lord, for Thy preserving kindness amidst the night-watches. Thou hast kept me in perfect peace and safety. I laid me down and slept, I have arisen in health and strength because the Lord hath sustained me. God of the sea, I thank Thee for the favour Thou art showing us. Thou art guiding our ship on the watery abyss, and speeding her on her way. I may think of her as

*Psalm 148, 7, 8, 12, 13.

a noble and gallant bark and admire her ploughing the foaming billows. But to Thee, the Heavenly Pilot, I know that all the homage and the heart's supreme affection are due for these and all our blessings. Thou too art our Protector and Physician. Thou hast kept from accident and injury, from sickness and death, all on board. That eye which never slumbers and never sleeps hath been upon us for good. Without Thy power and compassion the watch is set and the watchmen watch in vain. Praised be Thy most Holy Name for all Thy goodness and loving-kindness.

Pour out upon me, most Merciful Father, for the sake of Thy Beloved Son, the grace and influences of Thy Holy Spirit. May He enable and teach me to pray. My heart's aspiration is that I may worship Thee in spirit and in truth. "Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my meditation. Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God; for unto Thee will I pray. My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."

Enable me, God of the Sabbath, to enter into the very spirit of its observance and sanctification. Thou hast commanded all men to "remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." I thank Thee that even at sea I am privileged to abstain from all my ordinary labours, and that only works of necessity and mercy are required on board of our ship. May I be kept from sinful words and sinful thoughts as well as from sinful labour and pleasure. O deliver me from secularity of spirit. Alas! Lord, I have often profaned Thy Sacred Day by business, amusement, conversation, and the prevalence of the carnal mind. O enter not into judgement with Thy servant. Blot out, for the sake of what Jesus hath suffered, all my sins. Renew me after His image by the indwelling of Thy Spirit. "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared. I wait for the

Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.*

O Lord, Thou hast revealed it as Thy will that the disciples of Christ shall not forsake the assembling of themselves together. On this day Thy children are wont to meet in honour of the Son of man who is Lord of the Sabbath Day. Be with all Thy worshipping people this day. Bless them with increase of grace and joy. May Thy word have free course and be glorified. May a preached Gospel become to multitudes the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation. May a double portion of Thy Spirit rest upon those who minister in holy things. May they be wise to win souls. May they be instant in season and out of season. May they "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." Be the God of all consolation to the afflicted. May many be led to salutary and saving reflection by the trying dispensations of Thy providence. May they apply for pardon, reconciliation and eternal life through the offered and all-sufficient Saviour.

Bless, Heavenly Father, this ship's crew. We are to be favoured with an opportunity of waiting upon Thee in public ordinances.† Blessed be Thy name, Thou art not confined to temples made with hands. May our ship sailing on the great and wide sea be Bethel,—the house of God. May there be in it a company of living, spiritual worshippers. Prepare us for devoutly waiting on Thee. May the service be attended with much spiritual profit. Have mercy upon any of my fellow-seamen who care for none of these things. O give them to know the things that belong to their peace, lest they be for ever hid from their eyes. But, as for me, I will come into Thine house in the multitude of Thy mercy; and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy Holy Temple."

"Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only Wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

* Psalm 130, 3, 6.

† This of course is only suitable when Divine Service is held.

SECOND SABBATH.

EVENING PRAYER, TWILFTH DAY.

*Sing Psalm, 146, 1.**Read 2nd Timothy, Chap. 1.*

How excellent, O Lord, is Thy Name in all the earth. With my soul will I praise Thee ; " While I live, will I praise the Lord : I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."* I feel how " happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God : which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is : which keepeth truth for ever."†

I entreat Thy blessing, Almighty God, to accompany my reading of Thy Holy Word from day to day. Bless especially my reading of it this day and all my exercises. O, for entire conformity with Thy Holy Will.

Most blessed Lord God, I desire earnestly to intercede on behalf of Zion. " Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Visit and refresh Thy weary heritage. " Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion ! When God bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."† May it please Thee to reinvest Thine ancient people in their privileges. May they repent and believe in Jesus of Nazareth. May they look upon Him whom their fathers crucified and mourn with godly sorrow. May they see in the son of Mary the True Messiah promised of God and the glory of His people Israel. How felicitous will that era be to the Gentiles ! May the Lord hasten it, that all Heathen lands may be lightened by Him who is the True Light of men.

Regard, O Lord, with Thy favour and compassion those that go down to the sea in ships. May their ignorance of Divine things give place to saving knowledge and Heavenly wisdom. May they become prayerful, sober, just, holy, temperate. Bless them and make them blessings to their fellow-men.

* Psalm 146, 2.

† Psalm 53, 6.

I pray for my country ; may she ever be characterised by that righteousness which exalteth a nation. Deliver her from those sins that are the reproach and tend to the ruin of any people. Maintain and increase among the nation pure and undefiled Christianity. May superstition, idolatry, and anti-Christian error never again darken and degrade the land. Deliver us from that drunkenness which is our national disgrace. May abstinence and perfect sobriety prevail. Reclaim the drunkard. Let not the young and the unwary presumptuously go in the path of temptation.

Bless our Queen and her august Partner in life and all the members of their illustrious house. May the highest family in the land be a pattern of godliness, self-denial, humility, faith, charity, and good works. Counsel the Queen's counsellors ; teach her senators wisdom. May the places of trust and influence be occupied by the great and good. May the nobles possess the nobility of the Bereans of old. May the people fear and love the Lord.

I commend to Thy Fatherly pity, Gracious God, the afflicted and the sorrowful. Prepare the dying for eternity. Teach the living to prepare for death and the Judgement-Seat of Christ.

Now, O my God, I leave me in Thy keeping. May Thy loving guardianship be around me this night, and, if it be Thy Holy Will, may I be refreshed with healthful and hallowed repose for the duties of the coming day. All that I ask is in the name and for the sake of Jesus, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A MEDITATION FOR THE EVENING OF THE LORD'S DAY.

How important is it to exercise devout and humble, yet strong and confiding faith ! The way to attain this is to live near to God in secret and holy communion with Him. He, who has his communion and fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, will be steadfast even in the day of darkness and saddest trial. We have a beautiful instance of this kind in the Prophet Habakkuk. Dejected and perplexed at beholding the triumphs of the Chaldeans over the covenanted people, the man of God almost falters

and slips. But he speedily recovers his footing, so to speak, by remembering the unchangeableness of Jehovah and His eternal rectitude, who would be faithful and true to His promises. To his own God he goes in devotional pleading, and reinvigorates his faith in converse with the Most High. "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, Thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O Mighty God, Thou has established them for correction."^{*}

Be it my aim to be a believer of this stamp. What a beautiful specimen of the child of God is seen in the Psalmist when he says, "I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord: I will keep Thy statutes. I cried unto Thee; save me, and I shall keep Thy testimonies. I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hope in Thy Word. Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate in Thy Word."[†]

THIRTEENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read Exodus, Chaps. 33 and 34.

Merciful God, enable me now to approach unto Thee, rejoicing in the multitude of Thy tender mercies. Thou art good and art continually doing me good. For my preservation, safety, and comfort do I praise Thee. For what we constantly enjoy of Thy Providential blessing I praise Thee. Thou art guiding our ship over the trackless Ocean, keeping us from accident and injury in the midst of danger, and vouchsafing to us health and many enjoyments.

"Hear me, O Lord; for Thy loving-kindness is good, turn unto me according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies."[†] I am a sinner exceedingly before Thee. My own conscience convicts me. I could in no case stand before Thee, wast Thou to insist upon justice without mercy. "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" Adored

* Habakkuk 1, 12.

† Psalm 119, 145, 148.

† Psalm 69, 16.

be Thy name, "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment." In the Son of Thy love "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." May His all-prevailing Intercession be employed on my behalf. By His stripes may I be healed. In the fountain of His blood may I wash and be cleansed. By His Spirit may I be righteous even as He is righteous.

Most Merciful Father, bless to me the reading of "the Holy Scriptures." Sanctify me through Thy Truth. O Lord, Thou knowest that I am striving to sin not. Glory be to Thy Name for the encouragement afforded to every sinner seeking salvation in the Advocate we have,—"Jesus Christ the Righteous, the Propitiation for our sins." I would earnestly entreat, as did Thy most distinguished servant of old, "Show me now Thy way, I beseech Thee show me Thy glory." O may Thy "proclaimed" name be life and vigour to my soul.

Be with us, Almighty God, this day. Prosper our going. In due season may we arrive at our desired haven. Bless all on board with the blessing of Thy chosen children. Bless all for time and for eternity who are dear to me. Bless all the true and spiritual Israel with increase of grace. Add to the number daily. Bless Thy Church on earth. Bless all Bible and Missionary Societies, and make them successful in their glorious aim of bringing back man to God, perishing man to God our Saviour. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be all the glory, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

How exceedingly estimable and admirable is the character of Moses ! How emphatically may he be designated "the man of God." While meekness is his predominating grace, what disinterestedness, self-sacrificing generosity, unselfishness, most noble demeanour do I behold in him ! Where can such a patriot be found ? The annals of mankind fail to furnish his equal, if we except the great Paul of the Gentiles, who certainly was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles, and who alone, it seems to me, can stand as fully the equal, possibly the superior, of the unrivalled leader and

lawgiver of Israel. What patriotism and piety are implied in the appeal to the Lord of the King in Jeshurun, recorded Exodus 32, 31, 32. "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin ; and, if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." May I be enabled to copy His excellencies. His prayerfulness ought to be remarked, for doubtless it was in answer to prayer he became so distinguished. The meekest of men seems to have been naturally impetuous and irritable. It was Grace Divine that made him what he became.

How observable it is in both Moses and Paul that they sought not their own glory. God was all and in all to them. "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world" should be the heart's cherished sentiment of every Christian. How harmoniously does the amiable and grace-adorned Jeremiah accord with the principle, (see Jeremiah 9, 24.) "But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me that I am the Lord," &c.

THIRTEENTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read Matthew, 5th Chap.

In the spirit of devout gratitude and profoundest veneration enable me, Heavenly Father, now to offer unto Thee my evening homage of adoration, praise, and prayer. Thou art God Thyself alone, and besides Thee there is none else, the Living God, the Eternal God, the God of Covenanted Salvation to the followers of Jesus.

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Lord, I believe in Thy existence as Eternal, Uncreated, infinitely Glorious and Perfect. Thou art the Underived Author of all being. I also believe that Thou art Holy and that without holiness no child of humanity shall behold Thy glory in Thy august Temple on High. Thou lovest holiness and rewardest graciously every sincere endeavour on the part of fallen man

to attain unto it. In Thy word and by Thy Son from Heaven Thou hast enjoined this character upon all Thy children.*

May my faith be both Godly and Christian. While I believe in God, may I also savingly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Spirit of Christ rest upon me. It is the Spirit that sanctifieth. Most graciously do Thou send forth Thy Spirit into my soul. For this I do now most earnestly supplicate. Grant me what I ask for the sake of the merits of Him whom Thou hearest always and on whose intercession I rely. Father of peace and God of love, may I be enabled to cry unto Thee in the spirit of adoption, Abba, Father."

"Oh! how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid-up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men."† For Thy goodness, truth, and tender mercy which I have experienced, I do now again most gratefully praise Thee. For all personal and social benefits, for mental endowments, for my opportunities of Spiritual improvement, for Christian privileges and for Thy grace in Christ Jesus bestowed upon me, accept, O Lord, my humble and hearty thanks.

I beseech Thee now, O Lord, to blot out for Jesus' sake all the sins which I have committed during the past day and throughout my past life. O pardon my unfruitfulness, coldness, neglect, carnality, dulness in the things of Thy Kingdom, my hardness of heart, and my want of becoming and fervent love to Thee. I would lie down this night praising Thee for all the blessings of the past day. May the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep my heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Visit increasingly with this inestimable blessing all Thy people. I comprehend my people among Thy people. "God be merciful unto us and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth; Thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee."‡ May the words of my mouth and the meditations

* Leviticus 19, 2.

† Psalm, 81, 13.

‡ Psalm 67, 1, 3.

of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, through Jesus Christ, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

FOURTEENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Psalms 35 and 36.

O God, I adore Thee as infinitely glorious. All perfection adorns Thy nature. Thy goodness, wisdom, and omnipotency are inscribed upon all the works of Thy Hand. Thy glory is manifest in Creation ; as the Author, the Architect, and the Upholder of the universe, Thou art Divinely glorious. But Thou art yet more glorious as revealed in Christ and the Redemption wrought-out by Him. O be Thou glorified in making me a partaker of this great Salvation.

Heavenly Father, my weakness and sin, my felt inability and vileness often induce in me sad and cheerless thoughts. When I fail to discharge aright my duty, when perplexing cares crowd upon me, when I see not how to accomplish what I ought to do, when troubled on every side, fightings without and fears within, my heart is apt to indulge despondency. But, O Gracious Father, Thy renewed and renewing grace, as I think I experience it this morning, comes to me as Thy Voice saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is perfected in weakness." Praised be that God whose mercy, faithfulness, and love never fail.

I am delighted, O Lord, with the thought that all Thy perfections are on the side of the contrite sinner. Thou givest him to know Thee as a Reconciled and Loving Father in Christ, so that amidst Creation's glorious lay Thou never forgettest the child of clay. O may I be undoubtedly united to Christ, for then all things are mine. May I ever cleave to Him as my Saviour and Master, my King and Bridegroom. May I be a true member of that Church of which He is the Head and for which He is Head over all things.

Grant, O Lord, that I may be so filled with the influence of these truths that I may sail over life's tempestuous sea with humility, gratitude, joy, and constancy. May my life be hid with Christ in God. May the life that I now live in the

flesh be one of faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. O that I may adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour by a conversation becoming the Gospel.

Bless abundantly my dear fellow-seamen. Teach them to name the Name of Jesus and depart from iniquity. O that mariners in general were men of prayer ! Banish from them those sins which predominate in them and prevail against them, whether at sea or on shore. Bless my dear relations and friends. Bless with more and more of Thy Spirit the followers of the Lamb upon earth. Have compassion on the world. O that every sea and continent, every island and shore, were vocal with Thy worship and praise. Mercifully accept of me, O Lord, and answer my humble supplications through the merits of my Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

FOURTEENTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Sing Psalm 148, 1.

Read Acts, Chap. 9.

O Lord, my God, Thou hast taught me that that man is blessed who walketh not in the way of the wicked and ungodly, "but his delight is in the law of the Lord ; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." May Thy testimonies be "my delight and my counsellors."

I adore and praise Thee, O Most High, for the consolation afforded to Thy children in Thy glorious character and perfections. Thou art Supreme in power, Unerring in wisdom, Sovereign in grace and mercy. Amidst tumults, commotions, and trials Thou art a fountain of comfort to the believer. Thou hast revealed to him the Man Christ Jesus "as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest ; as rivers of water in a dry place ; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."* In this Blessed Saviour may I ever find peace, even when the storm rages and life is endangered by the tempestuous gale, when the seamen "roll to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." Thy children

* Isaiah 32, 2.

are taught to say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the depths of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." (Psalm, 46, 1, 3.)

By the working of Thy mighty power, O Lord, Thou subduest all things unto Thyself. "The day is Thine, the night also is Thine; Thou hast prepared the light and the sun." Man too is Thine and Thou canst control and change and create anew man's heart. Thy promise to Messiah is, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power."* This glorious promise Thou art even now fulfilling. Thou gatherest into the fold of the Good Shepherd many a wandering and many a wayward sheep. Thou canst turn the most bitter persecutor into the most zealous adherent. Thou didst change the mad Pharisee of Tarsus into the chiefest of the Apostles of Jesus of Nazareth. Eternal glory be ascribed to Thy Great Name.

Bless, Almighty God, my reading of Thy Holy Word. Through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may I be filled with hope. May I know experimentally that they are of Thee. May Thy truth humble, edify, and rejoice my soul. Bless our ship's crew, officers, and men. May they all be led to take Jesus as their Ark of safety in whom they will sail unhurt over the ruins of a perishing world. Thanks to God for all His goodness to us. Gather in speedily into the Kingdom of Thy Son Thy predestined, Spiritual Israel. In paternal loving-kindness be pleased to watch over me this night. Graciously accept of me through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

FIFTEENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Psalm 37.

Father of Lights, every good gift cometh from Thee. Thou art the Author of my existence. Thou givest me every new

* Psalm 110, 3.

day of my life that I may prepare for eternity. How unspeakably glorious is Thy gift of Christ to lost sinners ! I rejoice in Him as my Prophet, Priest, and King. I rejoice that He ascended on High to Thy right hand after He had finished the work given Him to do, having paid the price of man's ransom and the purchase of the Holy Ghost for the application of Redemption to all His people. I rejoice in His all-prevailing Intercession on His Priestly Throne on behalf of all that come unto God by Him. He is able to save them to the uttermost. And He will never cease to intercede until every ransomed sinner is fully saved.

I reflect with profound gratitude, Almighty God, on the Providential blessings which Thou hast bestowed upon me. My health, peace, liberty, safety, comfort, and hope, are all from Thee. And, when I associate with these what Thou hast done for my soul and all my Spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, oh ! how devoted and humbled should I be. Lead me to new and deeper repentance.

I mourn, O God, over the ingratitude I have often evinced notwithstanding Thy goodness. I am yet prone to selfishness, waywardness of temper, impatience, irritability, want of forbearance, and many other violations of the letter and spirit of the Law of my Saviour. God be merciful to me a sinner.

Let not the world or the things of the world steal away my heart from supreme love to God. I have hitherto had a sufficiency of the good things of the present time. My own experience attests the statement of Scripture, that "Godliness is profitable unto all things." Thou hast given me bread to eat and raiment to put on, the light and the rain of heaven, the invigorating breeze, the pure air, the beauty of day, and the silence and sublimity of night. Thou hast made the outgoings of the morning and the incomings of the evening to rejoice over me. How animating is that word of Thine "Delight thyself also in the Lord ; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit Thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." What more could I desire ? O give me grace to walk as a believer.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee; O let me not wander from Thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee."*

I beseech Thee, O Lord, make me truly good. May I know the blessedness of the perseverance of Thy Saints. I am confident that He who hath begun a good work in me will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Order my steps according as I have been reading in Thy Book; those of a good man are ordered by Thee. O may the blissful assurance there declared be realised by Thy most unworthy servant.

Be with me for good this day and at all times. May I discharge every duty aright, be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. May I be obedient to my superiors; civil, obliging, and courteous to all, never returning evil for evil, but striving to overcome evil with good. Bless all for whom I should pray, especially my kindred and near friends. May Jew and Gentile, bond and free, know the blessings of the Spiritual life and freedom conferred by Immanuel upon all who believe in Him. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be ascribed the kingdom, the power, and the glory, world without end Amen.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

EVENING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Sing Psalm 92, 1.

Read Acts, Chap. 10.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy Name, O Most High; to show forth Thy loving-kindness in the morning and Thy faithfulness every night." Every hour and every moment of the past day has been fraught to me with Thy mercy and goodness. For all Thy benefits, Providential and Gracious, I now, O Lord, offer unto Thee my humble and hearty thanks. Thou art the God of all my blessings. Life with its enjoyments and my hopes for futurity I derive from Thee.

* Psalm 119, 9, 11.

Thou art wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Enable me to "trust in Thee, Lord, for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."^{*}

Praised be Thy Name for the grace Thou hast manifested towards the Gentiles. Thou hast made them "fellow-heirs" with Thine ancient people, and of the same body, and partakers of Thy promise in Christ by the Gospel.[†] In Thy Beloved Son Thou art the Covenant God of the Jew and of the Gentile. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus."[‡]

May I profit by my reading of the call and admission of the Gentiles into the Christian Church. May I derive spiritual improvement from the recorded piety of the centurion Cornelius, and of his household and friends. O that our ship's company were like unto that good company. Baptise us with Thy Spirit. Bless us abundantly in our several stations and relations.

Vouchsafe Thy gracious protection and guidance to my Queen and country, to all rulers and those in authority, and to the whole people. Visit those who are mine by the ties of nature and affection with the love that Thou bearest to Thine own children. Keep me this night from all evil. While I sleep, may my heart wake with the love of Christ. When I awake, I shall be still with Thee. Mercifully hear and accept of me through Jesus, my only Saviour. Amen.

SIXTEENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read Romans, Chap. 8.

Most Gracious God, I know that it is good for me to draw near to Thee. I would say with Thy servant, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud."[§] Grant

^{*} Isaiah 26, 7, 4.

[†] Ephesians 3, 6.

[‡] Galatians 3, 28.

[§] Psalm 55, 17.

me Thy Spirit in His devotional influences. Spirit of Jesus, teach me to pray. I know not without Thee what things to ask. I need Thy teaching to enable me to ask right things in a right state of mind.

I praise the Father of Life Everlasting for His willingness to bestow upon the humbled suppliant the Holy Spirit. O Eternal Father, Thou, who didst originate the plan of human redemption, art also well pleased to give Thy Spirit to Thy children, for their ransom-price hath been paid, and the terms of the Covenant fully complied with by their glorious Covenant Head. If the paternal feelings of frail and fallen man ensure his readiness to bestow good gifts upon his children, much more wilt Thou give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

O Lord, give me more of the spirit of adoption that I may cry unto Thee, Abba, Father. May the Spirit help my infirmities, yea, make intercession for me in a way surpassing my understanding,—with groanings which cannot be uttered. For “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He makes intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.”*

How surpassingly wonderful is the Paternal relation which Thou sustainest to the believer in Jesus! May I know it savingly. O make me faithful to the Holy Ghost. May I answer to His calls, and cherish and act upon His convictions. Alas, how often have I slighted and resisted them! How must I have grieved the Spirit! Were it not that His love, tenderness, forbearance, and constancy are Divine, He would many a time have forsaken me for ever. And then there would have been nothing but impenitency and despair and an undone eternity before me. Glory be ascribed to that Sovereign and Gracious Agent of my risen Lord, who hath dealt so tenderly and so bountifully with me.

May I grow in grace and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May I advance in the Divine Life. May my progress be rapid and steady. Let not iniquity have dominion over me.

* Romans 8, 27.

Accept of my thanksgiving for the mercies and comforts of the past night and this morning. Throughout the day may the light of Thy reconciled countenance be lifted-up upon me. May my loved family, connections, and friends, be the objects of Thy favour and the subjects of Thy grace. Glory be to Thy Name for all that is pleasing, encouraging, and good in them. May my brother-sailors, and all with whom I am associated, be Thine in Christ. Never leave me whilst sailing over life's troubled sea. When I cross the Jordan of death, may it be but the passage to the Heavenly Canaan. "Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my Salvation."* All this I humbly and earnestly beg in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour. Amen.

SIXTEENTH DAY,
EVENING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read Acts, Chap. 2.

Almighty and Most Merciful Father, in the Name of Jesus I seek now with prostration of spirit to offer unto Thee my evening sacrifice. Sentiments of liveliest gratitude with earnest devotion should now possess my heart and mind. Thou hast given me ability to perform my duties as a sailor with a degree of satisfaction to our master and those with whom I am sailing. It is Thou, O Lord, who givest me any favour in the sight of man. Thou hast bestowed upon me my health of body and vigour of mind, my inward happiness and my external comfort. Thou art speeding and prospering us, amidst the perils and uncertainty of the deep. All these and innumerable other mercies which I am unable to specify demand the tribute of most grateful adoration and praise from the depths of my soul.

"Thanks be to God for His Unspeakable Gift." What an infinite boon has every saved sinner on earth in the Incarnation, Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and continual Intercession of the once crucified but now glorified Redeemer! I am awed by the knowledge that He, who as con-

* Psalm 33, 21, 22.

cerning the flesh was of the seed of Abraham, "is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen." With joy I remember that, when He ascended up on High, having fulfilled His engagements for His people, He received gifts for man that the Lord God might dwell among them. How blissful was the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the day of Pentecost! How beatific the consequence in the conversion of multitudes to the faith of Christ! How gracious the interposition of the Spirit on behalf of the Gentiles! How abounding the goodness that made them "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the Household of God!" O may they also, to whom Thy Word and the Gospel of Thy Son first came, soon believe in Jesus of Nazareth. Teach them who are Thine ancient and Covenanted people to worship Thee not merely as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In Him may they find pardon, justification, peace, adoption, consolation, and life everlasting.

I pray for my country. May pure and Scriptural Christianity prevail there. May True Religion ever find there a home and honour, a chosen sanctuary in this rebellious and dark world. May those inestimable privileges, civil and sacred, which were dearly purchased and safely handed down to us by our fathers, be inherited with undiminished integrity to the latest posterity. Bless our Queen and all in authority. Bless the people with the blessings of time, and above all with the blessings of eternity. Bless the whole human family. May the loved ones who are especially dear to me be blessed with all temporal, and all Spiritual, and Heavenly blessings in Christ.

Encompass me through the hours of repose and sleep with Thy Loving and Omnipotent Guardianship. Prepare me, if it be Thy Holy Will to prolong my life, for the duties, trials, and happiness of a new day. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be glory everlasting. Amen.

SEVENTEENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Read Psalm 39.

O Lord, my Heavenly Father, Thou hast spared me in Thy wisdom and goodness to see the light of another day. Enable me to consecrate myself anew to Thy service. "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."*

Every new morning, as it proclaims Thy protecting care and kindness, is also charged with solemn intimations. It reminds me that I am being carried down the stream of time and that soon I shall be ushered into the ocean of eternity. "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, Thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before Thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."*

I pray, Almighty God, that Thou wouldst make me strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Prepare me for whatever in Thy Providence may be before me. Increase in me a living faith. In its exercise, O give me the victory over the ungodliness of my own heart and of the world. Let not Satan deceive or injure me. Thou knowest how he seeks to ensnare and destroy. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Take away the hard and stony heart, and give unto me a heart of flesh. My natural heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Free me from it. Let the new heart prevail. May the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

Fit me, O God, for the future that it may please Thee I shall see in this world. Should times of trial and tribulation come, when all Thy faithful children must be witnesses for the Truth and courageous for Christ, O enable me to stand fast in the Lord. May none who have believed through grace

* Psalm 5, 3.

† Psalm 39, 4, 5.

be ashamed of Jesus in an evil day and generation. May we "stand therefore, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. May we take the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

May Thy truth and love be manifested unto all the disciples of the Lord. In the midst of sifting and separation may they be sound in the faith and holy in all manner of conversation. Preserve them from doctrinal errors and from dishonouring Thee by the practice of any sin. Qualify Thy Church and children for contesting on the Lord's side.

Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, I bow my knees unto Thee that Thou wouldst grant me according to the riches of Thy Glory to be strengthened with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith and that I may be rooted and grounded in love. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

SEVENTEENTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Sing Psalm 148, 1.

Read Acts, Chap. 12.

O Immutable Jehovah, permit a sinful and dying suppliant to call upon Thy thrice Holy Name. I rely upon Thy eternal love manifested in Christ, Thy Son, for acceptance. I rejoice that Thou never changest. "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all

of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.”*

Thou Faithful and Covenant-keeping God, Thou hast promised that, when Thy children ask of Thee in prayer, they shall receive. Blessed be Thy name, Thou hast not said unto Jacob, “Seek ye Me in vain.” Oh how gracious is that assurance, “Before they call, I will answer; and, while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”†

Thou didst deliver Thy holy Apostle Peter “out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews,” when prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto Thee for him. Lord, enable me, as an humble disciple of Jesus, to derive encouragement and improvement from such examples recorded in Thy Holy Word. Teach me to pray without ceasing. May the Spirit of Christ be manifest in the believing, earnest, united prayers of Thy people.

I adore Thee, O Thou that hearest prayer, that Thou hast heard even my humble prayer. In the day of trouble, in the hour of jeopardy, when exposed to the wintry blast, when assailed by the terrific storms, when man could not comfort, Thou heardest my cry and answeredst my supplications. I had fainted unless I had hoped to see Thy goodness in the land of the living. O, I will ever more endeavour to obey Thy consoling injunction. “Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.”‡

I would retire to rest this night praising Thee for Thy great goodness. I thank Thee for that refreshing word—“The Lord taketh pleasure in His people, He will beautify the meek with salvation.”§ Bless the followers of Jesus throughout the world. And gather-in Thine elec’ from the four winds of heaven. Visit me with safe and salutary repose.

* Psalm 100, 25, 27.

† Isaiah 65, 24.

‡ Psalm 27, 14.

§ Psalm 149, 4.

On a new day may I glorify Thee with renewed devotion. And unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be ascribed the kingdom, power and glory, world without end. Amen.

EIGHTEENTH DAY,
MORNING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Psalm 40th.

With reverence and Godly fear would I draw nigh unto Thee, O Most High, on the morning of a new day. With Christian faith and gratitude of heart may I worship. It is good for me to do so, "to show forth Thy loving-kindness in the morning and Thy faithfulness every night."

I praise Thee, "O Thou Preserver of men," for life and all its blessings. I praise Thee for the quiet, safety, and refreshment of the past night. "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me."*

"O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee; my soul thirsteth for Thee." Thou art the God of my life. I owe it in its origin and continuance entirely to Thee. By Thy goodness I at first breathed the vital air; by Thy goodness I have been upheld to the present hour. I am being carried down the stream of time and soon I shall be landed on the shores of eternity. I desire ever to bear in mind my frailty and mortality. May I be enabled to watch and pray for the coming of the Son of man, for I know not when the time is that the Master will come, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockerowing, or in the morning." May I ever be on the alert, lest, coming suddenly, He find me sleeping.

Almighty and Most Merciful Father, while I am solemnised by the certainty and nearness of death, I yet rejoice that I am in Thy keeping. Death will never separate me from my Covenant-God and my Omnipotent Redeemer. O give me to be able to say, "To me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Teach me to number my days so as to apply my heart unto wisdom. Enable me to redeem the time, because the days are evil.

* Psalm 3, 5.

O God, reveal Thyself unto me in the marvellousness and majesty of Thy mercy, and in the plenitude and power of Thy sanctifying grace. Visit me with the love which Thou bearest to Thy chosen ones. Enable me to unite a devotional spirit with activity, cheerfulness, and excellence in all the duties of my calling. May I be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Give me favour and good understanding in the sight of God and of man. Whatever I do, may I do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not merely as pleasing men.

Bless all with whom I am connected. May my kindred be united to me and all the followers of the Saviour by union with Him. Bless the Master, officers, and men of this ship. May they all call Jesus Master and obey His will. Never leave, never forsake us ; be our God and guide continually for Jesus' sake. Amen.

EIGHTEENTH DAY,
EVENING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Acts, 14th Chap.

O Lord, Thou art the God of all times and places. "The day is Thine, the night also is Thine. Thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth : Thou hast made summer and winter."* It is by Thy ordinance that the revolutions of the seasons and the alternations of day and night accomplish their happy and beneficial results.

Thou art the Living God. Thou hast "made heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are therein." Thou rulest over all. Thy Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Thee. The gods of the nations are vanity and a lie. Their idols are "silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not ; eyes have they, but they see not ; they have ears, but they hear not ; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them : so is every one that trusteth in them."†

* Psalm 74, 16, 17.

† Psalm 135, 15-18.

O Thou Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer of men, blessed be Thy name for instituting the holy Sabbath. Thou hast given unto man the day for the purposes of labour and business; the night also is Thy appointment, that after the toils of the day wearied nature may rest and be reinvigorated. The work-day and the Lord's Day are Thine;—the one Thou hast given us, that we may ply our wonted and secular pursuits, the other, that we may cultivate a meetness for the world that is to come. Thou hast brought me to the close of another week. Its days and nights, its watches and its leisure are for ever gone; they remain only in their consequences. Thou hast guided our ship in safety on the fathomless deep. Thou hast favoured us with health and peace. From "The terror by night and from the arrow that flieth by day, from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," Thou, O Lord, hast been our Shield and Deliverer. To Thy great name be glory and praise.

Prepare me, Heavenly Father, for the holy rest of the coming day. With feelings of intense love and gratitude for all Thy benefits and above all for those of the new and well ordered Covenant, I would retire to rest this night rejoicing in Thy Divine guardianship and Fatherly pity. May I wake to sanctify the Sabbath and to make it a delight. "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips; when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night-watches. Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."*

The blessings which I supplicate for myself I earnestly beseech Thee to bestow upon all who are very dear to me and upon all Thy people throughout the world. Look in mercy upon the whole human family. Graciously accept of me and answer my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

* Psalm 63, 5, 7.

NINETEENTH DAY,
THIRD SABBATH, MORNING PRAYER.
Sing Hymn.

Read Psalm 19 and James 1st Chap

How admirable are Thy perfections, O Lord, in Thy works and in Thy Word ! The sea is Thine. It is full of Thy wonders, speaking the endless variety of Thy power, wisdom, and goodness in the adaptations of the creatures and in the purposes which they serve. The dry land, which Thine hands have formed, also proclaims Thy riches, benevolence, and infinite ability. The suitableness and skill that are everywhere conspicuous announce the excellency of the Divine Architect and Ruler of all.

"The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." They have no speech or language as Thine intelligent creatures have, yet are they vocal with Thy praise. Though their voice is not heard by the ear of sense, yet to the rational and believing and devout listener they publish their Maker's Supreme Deity. I behold in the rotation of day and night indications of the merciful designs of my Heavenly Parent. Thou hast given us the day with all its various stages, from early dawn until the evening ushers in the season of rest, that we may ply our busy avocations. And, as the day is Thine, so also is the night. Thou hast given it to all the living world for the recruiting and renewing of its energies. Its darkness and helplessness, the awe of the midnight hour and the unconsciousness of men during its slumbers, all teach me my need of God and my ceaseless dependence on Him.

Praised be the Lord for the grandeur and gladdening influence of the sun. "Truly it is a good thing for the eyes to behold the light." How beautiful is it to witness the constancy and cheerfulness with which the king of day performs his functions ! He penetrates to all parts of the world and brings to maturity the precious fruits of the earth, so that grass grows for the cattle, and food for the service of man." "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his



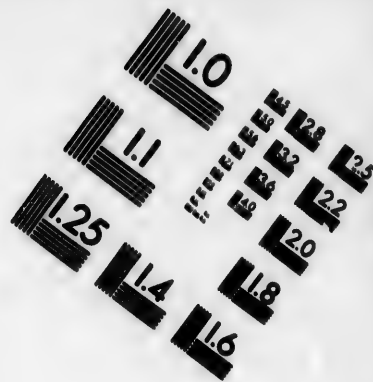
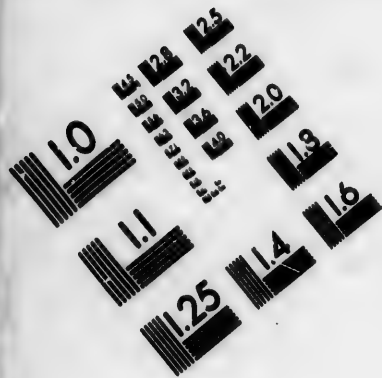
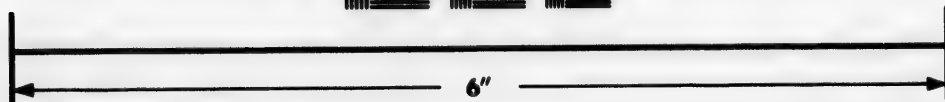
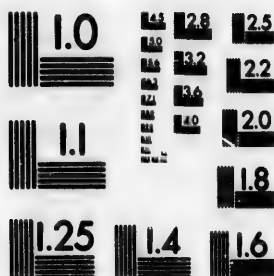


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circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

But I know, Almighty God, that, stupendous and magnificent as are the characteristics of the sun, he is but an emblem of a more glorious Sun. By faith I would behold “the Sun of righteousness,” the Bridegroom of Thy blood-washed and Spirit-sanctified Church. O give me practically and with saving efficacy to understand that “the Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” May this Law, which completely and infallibly answers its end, be my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ. May I know it in its renovating, sanctifying, restoring influences. Of Thine own will hast Thou, I humbly trust, begotten me by Thy Word of Faith. O enable me to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.

I pray that this may be a blessed Sabbath unto many. May those that seek to honour Thee in Zion be honoured with reviving communications of Thy grace. May multitudes, who have hitherto been only hearers, become henceforth doers of Thy Word. May the Saviour see of the travail of His soul this day and be satisfied in the salvation of a mighty throng. Bless the Ministers of Christ. May they watch for souls as they that must give account. Ministering in holy things, may they themselves be eminently holy. Delight their souls amidst their trials with the consolations of Thy Spirit. Seeking to save and water others, may they in their own experience be abundantly saved and watered. Bless Thy people. May the children of Zion be joyful in their King, and draw water with joy out of the wells of Salvation. May they feed upon Him who is the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. May they be living witnesses for Christ, and be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Bless, Holy Father, my fellow-voyagers. Thou art safely conducting us through the pathless deep. Sabbath after Sabbath hast Thou caused to shine upon us in peace and comfort. Bless our social and our individual exercises of Religion. Bless us in all the relations of life. May Master, officers,

and men be the better fitted to discharge the duties of the days of the week by the solemnities of the Sabbath.

Compassionate the ignorant and all who are out of the Way. Have mercy on scoffing and profane persons. Give them repentance unto salvation. Direct the honest and earnest enquirer. Prepare a people for the second coming of Thy Son. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be all glory, world without end. Amen.

NINETEENTH DAY,

THIRD SABBATH, EVENING PRAYER.

Read Revelation, Chap. 1.

Most Gracious and Everlasting God, regard now with Thy compassion and love Thy unworthy servant who seeks to offer unto Thee the homage of his evening devotion. To Thee I am indebted for every comfort and every hope. Thy grace also in the marvellous sovereignty of its exercise hath made me, I trust, an adopted child of Thy Ransomed Family. O may that grace in me not be in vain. May I fervently glorify Thee by advancing holiness of life, zeal for Thine honour, and love to my brethren of mankind. May the same mind be in me that was also in Jesus, my Lord.

Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift, I thank Thee for the consolation afforded by the assurance that with Thee there is no variability or shadow of turning. Thy gifts and calling are without repentance. Thou art Jehovah. Thou changest not. These gracious truths keep my heart from being overwhelmed by the contemplation of my own weakness and sin, and by the power of Thine enemies in this world. I would stay myself by trusting in Thee, O Lord. In the season of calamity I would say with Thy servant, "Thou art my God."

When I look, Almighty God, at my country, I have much to be thankful for, yet I see also much that should occasion fear and trembling. The intemperance, vice, immorality, infidelity, and wretchedness that obtain, are saddening in the

extreme. Alas ! there is much pernicious error even in Thy professing Church. And I dread that Thy true people are not always so zealous as are the Anti-Christian agents of a corrupt faith. Lord, have mercy on us, and save us according to the multitude of Thy compassions. When I learn the obstacles that are presented to the preaching of the Gospel and the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in many lands, when I know that darkness covers the earth and thick darkness the people, O I am deeply concerned and grieved. How long, Lord, how long ? "O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion !" Yet even now "the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice."

O Thou Omnipotent One, Thou canst restrain and eradicate prevailing Superstition and Idolatry, Atheism and Pantheism. Thou art even at this time giving many good tokens to Thy Missionary Churches and servants in the distant islands of the sea and continents of the world. Many of the barbarous people have embraced the offered Saviour and are walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. And many more are addressing to the Christians who have the Gospel the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." The fields in many places are white unto harvest. Great I am of the harvest, do Thou send forth labourers into Thy harvest. "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun ; when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against Him."*

Multiply great grace, Heavenly Father, unto all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. May they walk as a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. May they, "as living stones, be built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer-up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."† May all the Ministers of Christ, and the Office-bearers, and the members of His Church be increasingly faithful, affectionate, zealous, active, and devoted. May they look not every man on his

* Isaiah 59, 19.

† 1 Peter 2, 5.

own things, but every man also on the things of others. May they feel the liveliest concern for the souls of their brethren that are ready to perish. May they by prayer, liberality, and most strenuous exertions, become the honoured instruments in Thy hand of gathering-in Thine elect of Jews and Gentiles, of landmen and seamen, from the four winds of heaven. May the ordinances of Zion and Jacob, that have this day been dispensed, be attended with a mighty result of good.

Vouchsafe Thy favour to our Sovereign and all inferior rulers. Graciously visit all my fellow-voyagers,—superiors, inferiors, and equals. May those loved ones whom I ought to bear upon my spirit at the Throne of Grace have Christ in them the hope of glory. Bless my soul, O Lord. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Eternal Spirit, be ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

TWENTIETH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read Psalms 43 and 44.

O God, Thou hast made it to be the high honour and the glorious privilege of Thy children in Christ to draw nigh unto Thee at all times. It is especially their duty to offer unto Thee the morning and the evening sacrifices of devotion, to come before Thee with the living homage of the heart.

I would now, O Lord, supplicate—"Take away all iniquity and receive me graciously, so will I render the calves of my lips." I feel gladness and gratitude because of the innumerable blessings conferred upon me. What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits? O that I could walk worthy of Thy distinguishing goodness towards me. Lord, increase my faith, warm my love, and animate my hope.

Accept, Gracious Father, of my thanksgiving for Thy protection and favour throughout the past night. May I walk with Thee all the day. May the hallowing influence of the Sabbath be felt all the days of the week. O forbid, God of all grace, that Thy goodness should only be as the morning cloud which gives promise of rain to the parched and thirsty mariner,

but which passes away and disappoints his hopes. Let not the sanctifying and reviving influences of Thy Spirit depart from me, for then would the seed of Thy Word perish when the sun arose, because there was no deepness of earth ; all my convictions and contrition, my love, zeal, and heavenly-mindedness would depart like the dew of the early morning. " I thou art my King, O God ; command deliverances for Jacob."*

When I feel and reflect upon the corruption and sin of my nature, upon the deceitfulness and wickedness of my heart, upon the temptations that overcome me and the enemies that beset me, I am almost ready to despair. But in such an hour I would say in the language of Thy Word, " Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ? Hope in God ; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."†

I beseech Thee, O Lord, to take away the evil heart out of my flesh, and to give me a believing, a humble and a loving heart. Give me a heart of flesh. Purify me from all pollution of the flesh and of the spirit, that I may perfect holiness in Thy fear. Renovate me from the corruption of my nature, deliver me from the deceitfulness of sin, and enable me to overcome every bad habit, temper, practice, and disposition.

Multiply great grace unto all Thine Israel. Add daily to the number of believers. Hasten the coming of the Kingdom of Christ in all its fulness and glory. Bless loved kindred, friends, and companions. Bless those who desire that I should remember them in prayer. Fulfil in them all the good pleasure of Thy goodness and the work of faith with power. Fit me for all the duties, privileges, and difficulties of this day. And all that I ask is in the name of my Adorable Redeemer. Amen.

* Psalm 44, 4.

† Psalm 43, 5.

TWENTIETH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read 1 Thessalonians, Chap. 4.

At the close of this day, Almighty God, enable me to come unto Thee with unfeigned homage and hearty thanksgiving. Thou art the God of my life and the length of my days. In Thee I live and move and have my being. Glory be ascribed unto Thy name.

I am amazed, O Most Merciful Father, at Thy goodness towards me. How wonderful is the way by which Thou hast led me! Thou hast called me by Thy grace and made me a partaker of the Divine life. Thy Sovereign Spirit hath made me to differ from others and from my own sinful nature. In danger Thy providence hath protected me; from death Thou hast delivered me. While many of my early associates and acquaintances are in the state of the dead, Thou hast given me a greater length of the precious period of mortal existence. O! how solemnizing to think of those who are now sleeping in their graves beneath the green earth, and of those who are retained in the depths of the sea until that awful day when the sea shall give up the dead that are in it. They are waiting the Archangel's trump to sound. O! when the dead in Christ shall rise, may I be found in their happy company.

I am this night a monument of Thy sparing mercy and of Thy preserving goodness. For Thy love and kindness I fervently praise Thee, especially for Thy Redeeming and Sanctifying grace. May I be enabled to live as becomes the recipient of such vast favours. May I walk before Thee as one of Thy dear children. May I dwell "in the secret place of the Most High." May I abide "under the shadow of the Almighty."

I commend to Thy mercy my fellow-seamen and my fellow-men. Have compassion upon all the human family. Regard with Thy favour my country, the Queen, and all who bear the sword. Bless the people at large, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the young and the old. May husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, walk in the light of the Lord as the House of Jacob. May the

prosperous give glory to God. May adversity be sanctified to the children of sorrow. May those who are in the spring-time of life consecrate their opening affections and powers to Jesus. May those who are in the mid-time of their days remember amidst the bustle and anxieties of business that to be right with God is the one thing needful. May old age be found walking in the way of righteousness. And unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be all glory, world without end. Amen.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Psalm 45.

O Lord, Thou art the Originator of that glorious method of Redemption which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Thou didst so love the world as to give Thine Only-Begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. May I be a partaker of the faith that saves the soul ; and, being justified by faith, may I have peace with God through my Lord Jesus Christ.

I feel that I am vile, and that I have neither goodness nor strength. "What shall I do when God riseth up ? and, when He visiteth, what shall I answer Him ? If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me ; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse."^{*} In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. When to will is present with me, how to do that which is good I find not. There is a law in my members bringing me into captivity to the law of sin in my members. O ! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? O that I may be able to say with Thy servant, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."[†] Through Him may I obtain deliverance and victory. Apart from Him, all my righteousness is "filthy rags ;" yet in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.

Heavenly Father, I am ever refreshed and affected when I reflect upon my Glorious Redeemer's Advocacy on behalf of

^{*} Job. 31, 14 and 9, and 20,

[†] Romans 5, 26.

such a poor, guilty sinner as I am. Behold, O God, my Shield. Look on me in the face of Thine Anointed. I rely upon Him as the Propitiation for my sins. I rejoice in my union with Him, because He is made of God unto me wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. O that that infinitely endearing and tender interest, which my Saviour hath manifested towards me, may produce in me all the fruits of good living to the glory of Thy great name. May I be filled with all the fulness of God.

I rejoice, O God, that the same blessing that I ask for myself I am emboldened to ask for others also ; for Jesus Christ is "the Propitiation," not only for my sins only, "but also for the sins of the whole world." May those who are far off, and those who are nigh at hand, be admitted to a participation of the benefits of the New Covenant. "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Bless all on board. Prosper us in our voyage and in all our lawful undertakings. Watch over our families, kindred and friends. Reward our benefactors. Forgive our enemies. Praised be the Lord for the genial weather and all the comforts we enjoy. Continue Thy loving-kindness, and graciously accept of me through the merits of my Redeemer. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

How mysterious is this Divine grace—that the Son of the Highest should take my nature upon Him, live and die in that nature for me, rise again from the dead, ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on High, be there my infallible Advocate, my all-prevailing Intercessor having a paternal and fellow-feeling in all my weaknesses and sorrows ! O the height and depth, the length and the breadth of the love of Christ ! All this passeth knowledge.

Let me remember that it is in and through Christ, that I can draw nigh to God as a Father and reconciled God. O that the Spirit may work in me humble, yet firm and warranted, appropriating faith. When He enables me to know Jesus as my Saviour, I then also know God as my God. It is not enough to know that Jesus is a Saviour, and that God is the

Covenant God of His people. I must know the Father and the Son as *mine*. O that the Spirit may more and more accomplish this in me. Then shall I be able to derive consolation from this filial and indissoluble and holy relationship as the prophet did when he came unto Jehovah saying—"Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One ? We shall not die."^{*}

TWENTY-FIRST DAY,
EVENING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Hebrews, Chap. 12.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies ; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things ; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."[†]

O Lord Jesus Christ, I rejoice that Thou art Head over all things to the Church, which is Thy body—"The fulness of Him that filleth all in all." "Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity ; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."[‡] Omnipotent Saviour, I would extol the riches of Thy grace in taking hold of me a perishing sinner. Thou hast brought me "out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a Rock, and established my goings." I was going astray like a lost sheep, when "The Good Shepherd" gathered me into His fold. May I ever know Thy voice and follow Thee. May I walk as becomes a sinner who hath been ransomed by Thy Precious Blood.

I thank Thee, O Lord, for Thy guidance and guardianship of me all my life. May the discipline and corrections, which

* Habakkuk 1, 12.

† Psalm 103, 1-5.

‡ Hebrews 1, 8, 9.

in Thy providence I have experienced, be sanctified to me. I would not be without chastisement whereof all Thy children are partakers. But, oh! "rebuke me not in Thy wrath, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure." May Thy Spirit dwell in me, and I be so influenced by Him that it shall not be needful henceforth for my Heavenly Father to visit me with sore afflictions in order to bring me near to God. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits."*

Should it please Thee that I be brought into the deep waters of trial and sorrow, O may I be greatly improved by such discipline. Teach me cheerful resignation to Thy holy will. O Divine Refiner, may I come out of the furnace as silver seven times refined. May my Saviour see His own image perfectly in my soul.

Sanctify and comfort all Thy people. May untold multitudes experience the awakening and regeneration of the Spirit of Christ in the preaching of the Gospel.

Accept of my praise for the comforts of the day that is past. Be my guardian during the night-watches. Prepare me, if it be Thy will, for the duties of a new day. All my hope is in God, and all that I ask is in the Name of Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

On the subject of affliction the Psalmist says, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now have I kept Thy Word"—and again, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes."† My professional knowledge will illustrate to me how the best Christian character is formed amidst tribulation and difficulty. I would not expect the man, who had sailed only or chiefly in calm and untroubled waters, to be a seaman of a high order. The weather-beaten tar, who has endured storms and weathered many a gale and sailed on many a dangerous sea, will surely rank far higher as a sailor than that mariner who has had but

* Solomon's Song 4, 16.

† Psalm 119, 67.

little experience of such trials. So in the Christian life. The school of adversity is a severe, yet is it a salutary, instructor. Man is so carnal, vain, and easily intoxicated that he needs many monitors to keep him in his right mind.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Psalms 46 and 47.

O God, I feel profoundly impressed with the sentiment that "Thou desirest truth in the inward part." O give me to be able to say unto Thee, "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man." Thou knowest, Omniscient Witness of my heart, that I most sincerely desire so to delight myself. By the gracious operation of the Spirit of Christ in my soul, O enable me to attain unto more of this felicity.

Thou, O Lord, art a Spirit, and Thou requirest that they who worship Thee shall do so in spirit and in truth. Bestow upon me this grace. With Thine own, out of Thine own infiniteness, may I be enabled to serve and glorify Thee. Bodily exercise profiteth little. Forbid that I should come before Thee with only the homage of the body or without the entire homage of the soul. Alas! my deceitful heart is apt to be insincere in Thy service. Grant me, I beseech Thee, to experience the remedying renovation and indwelling of the Sanctifier. Pardon my past offences for the sake of the Atonement. Cleanse me in that Blood of Sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Accept, Heavenly Father, of my thanksgiving for all Thy goodness. I praise Thee that Thou hast spared me to see the light and to behold the beauty of a new morning. How manifold are Thy compassions? It is because Thy mercy is great above the heavens and faileth not that I am not cast off. Thou mightest in justice have consumed me in Thy wrath. When I think upon the sins of the days of my unregeneracy, and upon all my provocations, how astonishing is Thy long-suffering patience! Hadst Thou dealt with me according to my sins, hadst Thou rewarded me for one of a thousand of my transgressions, I had been cut down and consigned to the blackness of darkness for ever and ever. Praised

and magnified be the riches of Thy love and forbearance in Christ Jesus. What gratitude and love should I render unto the Lord for His sparing and bountiful goodness!

O Thou, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, do Thou make me faithful in every good word and work. May I profit by my Christian privileges. I have access to Thy Holy Word and to Thy Throne of grace. I have Thy Holy Spirit and Jesus on the Mediatorial Throne interceding for me. Thou hast also supplied me with books of Religious instruction and the impressive teaching of Thy Providence.

May many be added to the Church of Christ. May no weapon raised against Zion succeed. Thy Church, O Lamb of God, is safe, whatever enemies or opposition assail Her. Thou hast taught Thy disciples to say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early."^a

Look in pity, Almighty God, upon the suffering, the poor, the fatherless, widow and stranger. Reserve and protect those that are exposed to danger. Be with us in loving-kindness this day. And accept of my supplications and thanksgivings through Jesus Christ. Amen.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Acts, Chapter 17.

O Lord God of Israel, now that another day is gone, I would praise and call upon Thy Holy Name. Thy mercies are new to me every morning, and Thy faithfulness every night. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

^a Psalm 46, 1, 5.

As a company, my brethren with whom I am sailing and I ought to celebrate Thy goodness. Thy Providence hath sustained us, and Thou hast conferred upon us many mental and Spiritual advantages. We should erect our Ebenezer and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Thou hast rescued us from death, preserved us when exposed to sickness and danger, and made our way peaceful and prosperous. We have participated largely in Thy beneficence. O may we be the subject of Thy Saving Grace.

Make me, Almighty Father, to be more deeply humbled and more truly repentant than ever I have been. I acknowledge with unfeigned regret that I have grievously transgressed. I am among the chief of sinners. May my sorrow for sin be really of a Godly sort. May I find acceptance as a contrite sinner through the Beloved Saviour of sinners.

It hath pleased Thee, Lord of Heaven and earth, to hide the things of Thy Kingdom from the wise and prudent of this world, and to reveal them unto babes. Thou callest by Thy grace, quickenest by Thy Spirit, and preparest by Thy gifts those whom Thou art pleased to employ, to benefit and bless their fellow-men. Thou didst select the meek and lowly to be Apostles, and Evangelists, and Pastors and Teachers in the primitive Church. Thou art employing similar men still in advancing Thy cause on earth. O may I receive the kingdom of God as a little child.

May the Sacred Scriptures be everywhere circulated, and Christ Crucified be preached. Bless Thy servants who labour in the Word and Doctrine. May many search the Scriptures daily as did the noble Bereans. May the young be taught and trained from infancy and childhood in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Look in compassion on the aged and afflicted. Strengthen the feeble-minded, comfort the disconsolate, and prepare the dying for eternity. Teach me and mine, while we live, to live to the Lord, that, when we die, we may die in the Lord.

I now entrust me entirely to Thy keeping. Never leave or forsake me. Whether I sleep or wake, may my heart be with the Lord. Bless my sleeping and my waking hours. All my petitions I present in the Name of Jesus Christ, my

only Saviour, to whom, with the Father, and the Spirit, be all praise, might, majesty, and dominion both now and for ever. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

The 16th Chapter of the Acts narrates the Christianization of Timothy by the instrumentality of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. How amiable, beautiful, and endearing was the friendship subsisting between the chiefest of the Apostles and his "beloved Son Timothy!" How affectingly Paul writes to him, "Without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in Thee also."* How honourable is this to all the parties! It speaks the warm and pious affection of the writer and the excellence of the believing and Scripture-taught grandmother, mother, and son. How refreshing is it to contemplate the Christian heroism of Paul, his labours, his ceaseless activity, his travels by sea and land, his friendships, his sufferings, and losses for Christ's sake! What a spirit animated him! What noble enthusiasm does he display! O that I may participate in "the unfeigned faith" of such illustrious believers as the Apostle and his friends!

TWENTY-THIRD DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Sing Psalm 3, 5.

Read Psalms 48 and 49.

O Thou that inhabitest eternity, and inhabitest also the praises of Israel, bend a gracious ear to my humble worship. For the sake of Him who, though God over all, blessed for ever, was born in Bethlehem, in order that He might save guilty sinners, be pleased to visit me with Thy pardoning love and sanctifying favour.

* 2 Timothy 1, 3, 5.

All angels, cherubim, principalities, powers, the whole host of Heaven worship Thee with ceaseless adoration and praise. The living creatures, those around Thy Throne on High "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." The seraphim cry unto one another and say, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."* Eternal praise be ascribed unto Thee, O Jehovah, that notwithstanding the nobler homage of those pure, celestial spirits, Thou art revealed as declaring, "I dwell in the High and Holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and the heart of the contrite ones."†

Most Condescending and Good Parent, I would now and ever draw nigh unto Thee with profoundest reverence, highest esteem, and intensest love. Thou art the God of my being. By Thy paternal, watchful, most benignant Providence Thou art the God of my life. In Christ Jesus Thou art my reconciled God.

I rejoice, O Lord, to feel that I am safe in Thy hand. Thou doest what pleaseth Thee in Heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deep places. "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind."‡ My rejoicing is that Thou hast gathered the wind in Thy fists and bound the waters in a garment. It is the God of my salvation that "Hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet."§

Lord, make me fully Thine. Every new day brings with it by the renewed and enhanced blessings of Thy Providence and Grace additional obligations to love and serve Thee. May no iniquity have dominion over me. May my gratitude be ardent. May health, comforts, vigour of body and mind, talents, opportunities, time, and whatever else Thou hast entrusted to my stewardship, be all employed for Thy glory.

* Revelation, Chap. 4.

† Isaiah 57, 15.

‡ Psalm 48, 7.

§ Proverbs 30, 4, and Nahum 1, 3.

Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is ; that I may know how frail I am. " Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." I praise Thee for the unspeakable consolations that Thy children in Christ have. I know that I shall die, yet can I rejoice. For " God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave ; for He shall receive me."* While I live, may I live unto Christ, and, when I die, may I die united to Him. Enable me to set my affections on things above, and not on earthly things. May I be dead to the world and sin, and may my life be hid with Christ in God.

Most Merciful Lord, accept of my thanksgiving for all Thy past love and pity, especially for Thy favour and protection throughout the past night and this morning. May Thy blessing rest upon my fellow-voyagers and myself. May the risen Son of God be sent to bless us by turning away every one of us from his iniquities. Be the God and Father in Christ of all my kindred and friends. Multiply grace unto Israel. Have mercy on mankind. " Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the Only Wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."†

TWENTY-THIRD DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read Acts, Chap. 18.

O Lord, Thou art the Faithful and Covenant-keeping God. " Thy Word is true from the beginning." All Thy promises are in Christ Jesus, Yea and Amen. From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Thou art righteous in all that Thou hast revealed, and in all that Thou hast done. " Justice and judgement are the habitation of Thy throne : mercy and truth shall go before Thy face."

" Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound : they

* Psalm 40, 15.

† Jude 24 25.

shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance."* I would magnify Thy name for the finished work of Redemption, and for the descent of the Holy Spirit in token of the ransom-price having been paid. I rejoice to know that, when the risen Saviour ascended up on High, "He led captivity captive and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them." I bless, Thee, O Immanuel, for the saving benefits that attended the out-pouring of the Spirit on and after the day of Pentecost. When "The world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." How exhilarating is it to read in the Word of Truth that many believed and were saved! O that another Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit were granted to the prayer of Thy children!

It was Thy Providence and Thy Spirit, Blessed Redeemer, that raised up those honoured ministers recorded in Scripture, who were unwearied in Thy work. O raise-up, qualify, and call forth many such now. May Thy servants, who preach the glad tidings, be mighty in the Scriptures. May they not faint or fail. May they be unwearied in well-doing, knowing that in due time they shall reap. Increase the number of zealous, self-denied, able, and faithful men of God.

Glorious King of Zion, be pleased to crown with ample success the labours of Thy Missionary and Ministering servants.

May many run to and fro throughout the earth, and "the knowledge of the Lord" pervade human society. May men turn from dumb idols to the Living God. May Anti-Christian principles and confederations be destroyed. Bring to an end superstition and delusive religions. May the people be taught to worship God in the spirit, and to trust exclusively in Jesus as the Rock of Salvation. Bless, Lord, Thy professing Church. Bless that portion of it to which I belong. Lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes. May she be zealous and take avail of every door opened in Thy Providence by which she may save souls and carry-on the work of the Lord. May she be honoured to turn many to righteousness and to edify the Body of Christ.

* Psalm 89, 16.

May a rich blessing rest upon all who are dear to me and all who may desire my prayers. With grateful acknowledgements for the comforts of the past day I now retire to rest, committing unto Thee the keeping of my soul and body, my interests and anxieties. All that I ask is in the name of my Redeemer, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory everlasting. Amen.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Read Psalm 50.

Ever Adorable and Most Merciful God, it is good for me that I now draw nigh unto Thee. "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Thou hast caused me to enjoy safe and healthful repose. How different is it with many, who are made to possess months of vanity, unto whom wearisome nights are appointed! Alas! how different is it with some of my suffering or ship-wrecked brother-seamen. O accept of my thanksgiving for Thy loving-kindness and tender mercy unto me. And be a very present help in the time of trouble unto all those who cry unto Thee.

Almighty Father, I am deeply sensible that the time past of my life is more than sufficient to have wrought the will of the Gentiles. Henceforward I would yield myself unto Thee, as alive from the dead, and my members as instruments of righteousness unto God. I would be every day preparing for my last day and for the second coming of my Lord. O prepare Thou me for that inconceivably grand appearing of the Son of Man and Uncreated God for which I am taught to look in Thy Holy Word. When the Archangel's trumpet shall sound, may I then be associated with the rising of the dead in Christ. I would ever be looking forward to that most august and solemn of all occasions. May I then and may I now be among the number of the sanctified in Christ Jesus. For "He shall call to the Heavens from above and to the earth that He may judge His people. Gather My saints to-

gether unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

May they who are very dear to me be Thine in Jesus. Let them not be among the vast number "that forget God." May they live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. In particular I beseech Thee for the young. From childhood may they know the Holy Scriptures, which are able, to make them wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. To this Blessed Saviour may they be united. May they evince towards Him the kindness of youth and the love of espousals. May "holiness to the Lord be inscribed upon them and the first fruits of their increase." I entreat Thee, O Lord, to fill me with Thy sanctifying Spirit. Thou hast said "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." With my lips and my life may I praise Thee. Guide me by Thy counsel while I live and afterwards receive me to glory.

May it please Thee to continue Thy goodness to us all on board. Make us partakers with Thy saints in the blessings of the New Covenant. Bring us in peace to our desired haven, and cause us to dedicate ourselves to Thee in holy newness of life. And to Thy Great Name in the Redeemer shall be all the glory, world without end. Amen.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

EVENING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Sing Psalm 4, 4.

Read Acts, Chap. 19.

O Lord, Thou art wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. The God of the whole earth art Thou. Thou humblest Thyself to behold the things that are done in Heaven and in this lower world. Thy love to mankind has been such that Thou sparedst not Thine Only-begotten and Well-beloved Son, but didst send Him forth to be Incarnate, and to atone for sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, which is unto and upon all them that believe.

* Psalm 30, 5.

"The eyes of all wait on Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."* Over man Thou exercisest a most benignant care. Even in his alienation and rebellion Thou art bountiful and long-suffering to him. Thou makest Thy sun to arise upon the evil and the good, and sendest rain upon the just and the unjust. For regenerate man Thou doest more. Whilst he has pardon and peace in believing, and is an heir of the Heavenly inheritance, Thou bestowest upon him the blessings of this life as Covenanted, promised gifts. "His bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure."

I praise Thee, O God, for the ample experience I have had of Thy faithfulness in temporal things. For Thy grace realized in the spiritual life would I now give unto Thee hearty thanks. Grant me increase of all the influences of Thy Spirit. United to my Saviour by faith, may I receive out of His infinite fulness, "even grace for grace." May the same grace, that shone so conspicuously in the Man Christ Jesus, be reflected in me as deriving vitality and prosperity from my Living Head. May the trying of my faith work patience; and may patience have her perfect work. I have great need of firmness, gentleness, prudence, affection, and the meekness of wisdom. Heavenly Father, I would ask of Thee in faith, knowing that Thou "withholdest not but givest liberally of Thy Spirit in answer to the prayer of faith. May I ever be advancing to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ.

Praised be Thy name for all the goodness vouchsafed unto me throughout the past day. Guard me during the night-watches. Sanctify to me, and to all who peruse them for spiritual good, the reading of "the Holy Scriptures." O that results of turning from sin and all unrighteousness were now remarkable as in the day when it was said, "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

I commend to Thy most tender care all who are especially dear to me. May they be Thine in Christ for time and for

* Psalm 145, 15, 16.

eternity. And unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall be the glory for ever. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

On the subject of Covenanted temporal blessings, how tender, consolatory and satisfying are the words of Jesus to His Disciples, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."* Again, "For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."† Thus are the children of God, though strangers and pilgrims in this world, assured that, walking uprightly, no good thing shall be wanting to them. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance."‡

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER/ SATURDAY.

Sing Psalm 5, 1.

Read Psalm 51.

O Lord, Thou art the Eternal, Ever-Living God. I adore Thee as the fountain of life,—of life temporal, spiritual, and everlasting. In the name of Thy Beloved Son, who is "The Way, the Truth and the Life" to guilty man, I desire now and at all times to present my humble offering of prayer. Graciously for His sake regard my homage, confessions, acknowledgements, and petitions. Blessed for evermore be He who came in the name of the Lord to save sinners. In Thy light, O Jesus, shall I see light.

I know, Almighty God, that every new day and the return of every additional morning should find me growing in newness of life, and renewing my spiritual strength. O that it were so! Alas! how far behind am I of what I should have

* Matthew, 10, 29, 31.

† Luke 12, 30, 31.

‡ Psalm 53, 12.

attained! O that I were enabled to walk worthy of my Christian vocation and of the obligations under which Thy goodness hath laid me.

Father of mercies, accept of my thanksgiving for all Thy love and favour towards me. I praise Thee on this the beginning of another day for the preservation and peace of the past night, for Thy protection and Paternal guardianship during the hours of helplessness and sleep, and for the gladdening and strengthening effects of my repose. I ought to be grateful for the advantages of my lot in life. Though my circumstances and associations as a seaman are not in all respects favourable to a close walk with God, yet Thou, O God of all consolation, canst make all grace to abound towards me, so that I may by faith overcome the world. How marked have I felt Thy Paternal care of me in Providence to be amidst the pelting of the storm, the inclemency of the season, and the severity of the weather. Thou hast furnished me with such clothing and comforts, Thou hast bestowed upon me such health and vigour as call forth my fervent gratitude. And I humbly yet confidently trust that that Redeemer, who hath sustained and carried me in safety when in the midst of gales and perils of the deep, will be with me all the days of my life, in the dark valley of the shadow of death, and unto the land of celestial uprightness. O Thou God of all goodness, Thou art infinitely able and infinitely willing to do for Thy children exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think.

Lord, bless and pity me. Lift upon me the light of Thy reconciled countenance. Keep Thou me from besetting sin. May I not be overcome by temptation. May the sins, into which even some of Thine own people fell, and by which they brought great reproach upon Thy cause, serve as warnings to me to avoid the approach to unholiness. May I regard them as beacons to deter me from coming near the paths of danger, lest I make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. May I walk circumspectly, not as a fool, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. May I possess a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

I pray earnestly for the natural and for the spiritual Israel. May the blissful period soon arrive when they shall be united in the Nazarene, in "the Root and the Offspring of David." Grant my companions and myself much of Thy favour this day. Prosper and bless us at sea and on shore, in this world and the world to come, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

To what a dreadful state had his sin reduced David ! Agitated with terrific fear, he prayed unto the God against whom he had sinned, "Cast me not away from Thy presence ; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." Yet I observe that even in the time of his deepest anguish he exclaims, "O God, Thou God of my salvation." May Jehovah keep me from sin and make me strong in faith. How appropriate the Apostolic precepts ! "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints ; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient ; but rather giving of thanks."*

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY, EVENING PRAYER, SATURDAY.

Read Luke Chap. 5.

How excellent, O Lord, is Thy Name in all the earth ! Thou hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Thou givest the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night. Thou dividest the sea when the waves thereof roar. The Lord of Hosts is Thy name. Thou hast made heaven and earth and the sea and all that in them is. They all perfectly answer the purposes of their creation, obey Thy laws, minister to man, and declare Thy glory.

I am filled with wonder and awe, admiring when I contemplate Thy creation. How well may I exclaim with the Psalmist ! "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works ! in wisdom hast Thou made them all : the earth is full of Thy riches : so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships ;

* Ephesians 5, 3, 4.

there is that leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season.”*

All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord ; and Thy saints shall bless Thee. Number me, God of grace, with Thy children in Christ. They in disposition, aim, and essential character, are like unto Jesus. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. O give me the heritage of Thy people. Quicken Thou me from the death of sin to the life of holiness. Give me the spirit of adoption that I may say unto Thee, Abba, Father.

O Lord, Thou hast appointed one day in seven to be a holy Sabbath unto Thyself. May the Lord of the Sabbath prepare me for its holy observance. Enable me with diligence and devotion to improve the opportunities of the Sacred Day. Keep me from both idleness and worldliness on the coming Sabbath. May I all the day be exercised with sacred things. Bless Sabbath ordinances. Meet with Thy Ministers and people in Thy Sanctuary on Thy Day. Be with those who regret the deprivation of the inestimable privilege of worshipping with Thy saints within the gates of Zion. Be unto them “as a little sanctuary.” Have compassion on multitudes of Godless transgressors, who have no mercy on themselves. May they learn to know the things that belong to their peace, lest they be for ever hid from their eyes.

I now commend me this night to Thy Paternal keeping. May no evil befall me or plague come nigh our ship. May my sleep be healthful and hallowed. All that I ask is in the name of Jesus Christ, my Saviour. Amen.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY,

FOURTH SABBATH, MORNING PRAYER.

Sing Psalm 42, 1.

Read Isaiah Chap. 58.

Most Blessed and Holy Lord God, Thou art worshipped and glorified by innumerable high and happy spirits around Thy Celestial Throne. Yet dost Thou most graciously en-

* Psalm 104, 24, 27.

courage the frail and fallen children of men also to seek Thy face. For this purpose Thine own Son, once crucified for sinners and now at Thy right hand, is revealed as the Mediator between God and man, and the Great High Priest who ever liveth to make intercession for us. By the influence of His Spirit of Truth may I be enabled to worship Thee in spirit and in truth.

Praised be the Lord, who hath been pleased to institute this Day of Sacredness. I thank Thee, O Father, for my preservation. I have been spared in Thy good Providence to open my eyes upon another Day of the Son of Man. I recur to the grand work of Creation, which it commemorates, and to the still grander work of Redemption, of which it also recalls to mind. On this First Day of the week the disciples of Christ rejoice in Thy wisdom, power, and goodness. These glorious attributes shine forth illustriously in the formation and arrangements of the material universe, and in the constitution of this lower world with man, the lord over all the inferior creatures. But Thy perfections are more awfully displayed in the Work of man's salvation. How adorable art Thou as when beheld by faith! Thy mercy is there manifestly in harmony with Thy justice; I there see Thee, the just God and the Saviour, the God of everlasting love originating the atonement and righteousness of my Saviour, the God of inflexible justice not sparing Thine Only Son whom Thou lovest, but causing Him to die a Propitiation for the sins of His people, that through His death they might attain eternal blessedness. Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift. On this Lord's Day I would celebrate the triumphs of my glorious Head and Representative. When He had offered Himself without spot unto God as the substitute and sin-offering of His ransomed followers, and tasted death for every man, He arose a Conqueror over death and the grave. My Saviour was proved to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.

How precious are the ordinances and advantages of the Christian Sabbath! On this Day Thy people are wont to assemble within the gates of Zion, to show forth Thy most worthy praise, to read and to hear Thy most Holy Word, to

do homage to Zion's King, to be refreshed with the living waters of Salvation, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Meet with them all to bless and to do them good. May they feel that a day spent in Thy courts is better than a thousand. May they be edified, sanctified, and established in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation. And O that many may be added to their number this day ! May their ranks be recruited and their company increased by a vast multitude of the spiritually dead awaking and arising to receive light and life from Him who is "the Bright and Morning-star," and "the Sun of righteousness."

Bless abundantly Thy Servants this day who labour in the Ministry of reconciliation. May they fully, affectionately, and faithfully preach the Gospel. May they be workmen that need not to be ashamed. May they be rewarded in their own souls ; may they also be rewarded with success in the many that they shall be instrumental in saving, and who shall be to them for a crown of joy and rejoicing in the day that Thou makest up Thy jewels.

"How amiable are Thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts ! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord ; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."* O God, my God, supply to me the lack of privileges and of the ordinances of Thy House this day. Thou knowest how inestimably I prize them. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God : when shall I come and appear before God ?"†

O my Heavenly Father, when I am affected by troubled nature around me and by internal sorrows, when tossed by the tempest, and reeling because of stormy wind, I am at my wits' end, teach Thou me to say with Thy servant, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts : all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night

* Psalm 84, 1, 2.

† Psalm 42, 1, 2.

His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

Bless all of us on board this day. May it be to us a Holy Day. Multiply unto us Thy loving-kindnesses and beautify us with Thy salvation for the sake of Thy Dear and Only Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY,

FOURTH SABBATH, EVENING PRAYER.

Read Hosea Chap. 11, and Hebrews Chap. 4.

O Thou Adorable, Ever-blessed Lord God, with deepened solemnity, awe, and reverence, would I now come into Thy presence and worship at the footstool of Thy Throne. Thou art God Thyself alone, and besides Thee there is none else. The gods of the blinded nations are vanity and a lie, the gods which alienated man worships are devils and idols that steal away his allegiance and heart from Thee, the Only True and Living God. Alas ! Man in his unregeneracy still makes to himself gods many and lords many, giving his affections, soul, and body to them rather than to Thee, O Thou Eternal, Infinite, most Holy and Good God.

Grant, I beseech Thee, Omnipotent Father, for the sake of Jesus Thy Beloved Son, that my affections may centre upon Thee. Be Thou their supreme object. Be Thou my satisfying portion. Be Thou all and in all to me. Hast Thou indeed drawn me with the cords of a man, with bands of love, as Thou didst draw Thy people of old ? To Thy Name for ever be all the glory. I hope that that God of sovereign grace and love, who loved Israel when a child and brought His Son out of Egypt, hath also brought me out of the Egypt of slavery to Satan and sin, hath rescued me from the horrible pit and the miry clay, hath set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. To Him with my whole soul will I ascribe honour and praise. To the Father whose love from eternity sent His Son into the world to save it, to the Son who came to give His life a ransom for many and render perfect obedience to the holy law of God, and to the

Holy Ghost who quickeneth the dead sinner and leadeth him to the Saviour, who also sanctifies and comforts the believer—to the Ever-Blessed Divine Trinity be ascribed all praise, dominion, and glory for ever and ever.

Thanks be to the Lord for the goodness experienced this day. How lovely is the institution of the Sabbath! How invaluable its privileges! I mourn over my past misimprovement and desecration of the Sacred Day. "God be merciful to me a sinner." Wash me in the blood of atonement and I shall be clean, for it cleanseth from all sin. Save me by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Adorn me with the pure robe of my Redeemer's righteousness. Clothe me with that "fine linen which is the righteousness of saints."

Bless to me, Giver of all good, the ordinances and the exercises in which I have this day been privileged to engage. Thou art a God nigh at hand and not a God afar off. Thou art the God of the sea as well as of the dry land, of the roaming mariner equally with the more favoured dweller upon earth. And I rejoice to know Thou canst be sought and found as easily on the deck or in the fore-castle of a ship as in any of the dwellings of Jacob, or even in the Sanctuary more especially set apart for Thy worship and Thy Word. O God, bless the opportunities of this day. May they be sanctified for the advancement of all good which Thou hast begun in my soul. Humble, abase, instruct, comfort, rebuke, purify, and everlastingly save Thy poor servant. May my ceaseless aim, and by Thy grace my happy attainment be, entire conformity to Thy will and image.

God of the spirits of all flesh, be pleased to bless Thy Word and offers of salvation to perishing sinners. Bless them this night to multitudes who may this day have heard them. O God, Thy Church and Thy servants mourn that so few among the hearers of a preached Gospel are savingly converted unto Thee. O for times of refreshing and revival from the presence of the Lord! Awaken those that are asleep in Zion. Make the spiritually dead to arise, that Christ may give them light. May Thy Word have free course and be glorified. May the results be evinced in the turning of great multitudes from sin

and Satan to holiness and to God. May Thy people be edified and built-up in their most holy faith. May they walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Holy and Gracious Father, I especially supplicate Thee on behalf of those with whom I am connected by the ties of kindred, affection, calling, and companionship. May all my loved relations be Thine in Christ. O forbid that any of them should go down to the grave without pardon through the blood of Jesus and union to Him as the Head of His Body; the Church. Multiply grace, mercy, and peace unto Thy children. May they walk in love. May their love be without dissimulation. May they abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good. May many mariners be added to this class. May they prize and improve the opportunities of Spiritual good within their reach. May they thus be prepared and honoured to save themselves and the souls of those with whom in Thy Providence they are called to have intercourse. In particular I beseech Thee to bless my shipmates and all on board this vessel. May we all be fellow-heirs of eternal life.

I commit me, Father of mercies and God of all loving-kindness, to Thy Paternal and Providential keeping this night. Grant me the sleep of Thy beloved. Even when I sleep may my heart wake with love to Him who loved me and gave Himself for me. May the salutary and hallowing influence of the Lord's Day pervade my spirit and conduct during all the days of the week. And, when my days and nights on earth, my week-days and my Sabbaths, shall have terminated, O may I obtain an admission to the exercises and felicity of that Sabbatism which remaineth for Thy people for ever. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be glory everlasting, world without end. Amen.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read Psalms 56 and 57.

With grateful praise and deepened solemnity would I this morning approach Thy sacred presence, O Thou infinitely

Holy One. I offer Thee my thanks in the name of my Great, Only, and infinitely adequate Mediator for all Thy love and grace, for the bounty and beneficence of Thy Providence, for the blessings of day and night and of the Sabbath and the days of labour.

May the privileges of the past Sacred Day be sanctified unto me. May a hallowed influence be upon me all the days of the week. I thank Thee, Heavenly Father, for the rest and sleep of the past night. Thy goodness hath made me to feel glad and refreshed this morning. Thou art giving me the prospect of again landing on a shore where I may unite with Christians in the ordinances of Zion. We should erect our Ebenezer when we reflect upon the prosperity, health, and comfort of this voyage, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Now that it may be drawing nigh its end, O may I not ungratefully forget the Author of all its enjoyments. And, when I may be imperilled or in dread of any enemy, may I be enabled in faith and reverence to say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee. In God I will praise His Word; in God I have put my trust."* With fixedness of heart enable me to pray, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me."†

Grant me Thy favour and love, O God. May I also have goodwill and esteem in the sight of men. Enable me to perform well my ship duties. Let not negligence or mistakes or incapability be chargeable against me. And, while attentive to the claims of man upon me, O may I be dutiful in the discharge of my closet and devotional exercises. May my communion and fellowship ever be with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

Almighty and Ever-blessed God, I pray for my shipmates, companions, friends, relatives, and benefactors. Visit them with the love which Thou bearest to Thine own people.

* Psalm 56, 3, 4.

† Psalm 57, 1, 2.

Forgive my enemies. Have mercy upon sinners in danger of perishing for ever. Bless all Thy children with increase of grace. Graciously listen to these my humble prayers for Jesus' sake. Amen.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

EVENING PRAYER, MONDAY.

Read Acts Chap. 20.

Almighty God, Thou art the Father of mercies and the Fountain of all felicity. In Christ Jesus the guilty sinner has in the day of salvation a warrant to come boldly to the Throne of Grace that he may obtain pardon and the renovation of Thy Spirit.

Thou art the Proprietor and Giver of all my blessings. Thine is the air that I breathe, the refreshing water that I drink, which Thou hast caused the springs of earth and the clouds of heaven to supply; Thine is the food that sustains me and the raiment which clothes me; Thine is the light which is sweet, and the sun which it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold, and the salubrious breeze which enlivens and braces man. Thine are all the blessings of this life.

And not less, O Lord, art Thou the Author of all Spiritual, Heavenly, and Everlasting blessings. I adore Thee as the God of my salvation. It was Thy eternal love that sent Thy Only-begotten Son to this world to be lifted up on the Cross that every believer might attain never-ending life and happiness. Thy grace hath made me, a chiefest of sinners, a partaker of Christ. Glory to God who hath made even me to differ, and constituted me a member of His Son.

By the spirit of adoption may I be enabled at all times to cry unto Thee, Abba, Father. In the humble exercise of the confidence created by this relation, may I say, It is my Father "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance. Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold He taketh-up the isles as a very little

thing.”* How astonishing that I should be as much the object of Thy care as if I were the only being for whom Thou hadst to care. Yet so it is with every disciple of the Blessed Immanuel.

I rejoice that I have this night been privileged to read a portion of Thy Holy Word. May the Spirit sanctify me through Thy Truth. May there be many successors of Thy holy Apostle Paul raised-up, men of God, who shall realize a similar spirit of closet communion, ardent zeal for Thy glory, and ceaseless activity for the good of men with that which so illustriously shone in him. May many run to and fro by land and by sea for the cause of Jesus and the salvation of sinners that are even now almost ripe for eternal ruin.

“Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only Wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Psalms 56 and 57.

Unto whom, O Lord, can I go but unto Thee? Thou art the Author and Bestower of eternal life. Unto whom, Omniscient Saviour, would I go but unto Thee, who hast loved me with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness hast drawn me to Thyself? May the Spirit of grace now rest upon me as a Spirit of true and earnest devotion.

Thou hast spared me, Heavenly Father, to open my eyes upon the light and pleasantness of a new day. I praise Thee for all Thy Providential and Paternal kindness. Grant that I may be enabled to act as the child of so many mercies. “Thy vows are upon me, O God. I will render praises unto Thee. For Thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt Thou not deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living.”†

Make Thy grace sufficient for me, perfect Thy strength in my weakness. Thou art able not only to deliver my soul from

* Isaiah 40, 12, 15.

† Psalm 56, 12, 13.

death, but also mine eyes from tears and my feet from falling. O Lord, I will praise Thee, "for Thy mercy is great unto the heavens and Thy truth unto the clouds."* Thou art that most merciful God who looked upon me in my low and lost estate. Thou didst bring me to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Thou hast begun in me the good work of sanctification. Continue, O Father, Thy rich goodness. Behold Him who is my Living Head and King. Grant me full acceptance in the Beloved. May all my sin be dispossessed from my soul. Enable me to go on to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Uphold my goings this day. May Jesus be felt by me as infinitely excellent and unspeakably precious to me. Verily "He is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely." O may I be able truly to appropriate the language of the bride, and say, "As the (citron) apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love. His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me."†

To Thee, O Lord, who alone art able to save them and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, I commend my companions, friends, and relatives. May those who are especially dear to me love Thee supremely. I pray that Thy merciful regards may visit all men. Be the God of the young and inexperienced. Bless in particular young seamen. O teach them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. May they learn to know Thee and to serve Thee with a perfect heart and a willing mind.

Be with me this day for good. My highest and single aim for myself is that I may glorify Thee by a conversation becoming the Gospel. Multiply grace, mercy, and peace unto me for Jesus' sake. Amen.

* Psalm 67, 10.

† Song of Solomon 2, 3.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, TUESDAY.

Read Acts Chap. 22.

O Lord, my Heavenly Father, I praise Thy great name as the greatest and the best of all beings. Thou art infinite in all perfection. Thine attributes, Thy works, Thy government, Thy laws, are all worthy of Thy Divine, underived, eternal glory.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, Thou art exceeding great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds His chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind."^{*}

When I behold, Thou Creator of all things, the beauty and utility of day and night with their bearing upon all the creatures, when I consider the vast sublimity of Creation with all its provisions and adaptations, how well may I exclaim "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to God while I have my being."[†]

Enable me, O Lord, to be a genuine follower of those who are now through faith and patience inheriting the promises. Like them, may I fight the good fight of faith, run the race set before me, and lay hold of eternal life. Everlasting praise be ascribed unto God, who hath imparted to me a measure of Divine grace. Praised be my God for His sovereign Spirit and His quickening influences in my soul. For His invigorating, fructifying, enlivening presence I praise Thee. By nature I am destitute of Spiritual good. The arid wilderness, the barren land, the stagnant pool, or the dead sea, where

^{*} Psalm 104, 1, 3.

[†] Psalm 104, 24, &c.

want and wretchedness, desolation and death, reign, are emblems of my Godless condition until born of the Spirit, What shall I render to the Lord, who hath made me a partaker of Divine life and hope, for all His benefits? May I be enabled to walk as the recipient of such blessings to the glory of Thy Great Name.

My fervent prayer is that the same blessings may be realized by many more. Especially would I beseech Thee on behalf of mariners and those that go down to the sea in ships. Thou knowest, Lord, their disadvantages, the strong temptations to sin with which they are often beset, the difficulties and discouragements of their vocation, their own weakness, ignorance, and waywardness. Thou knowest also how little in past days even Thine own people cared for their souls. Praised be that abounding grace that can overcome all obstacles. I rejoice and give thanks for the lively interest that is now taken on behalf of poor seamen by some of the children of Zion. May the happiest results be the consequence.

Watch over me, most Gracious Parent, this night. Fit me for a new day and its duties, if it be Thy holy will. And the glory shall be Thine in Christ Jesus, world without end. Amen.

A MEDITATION.

What an admirable character does Paul present to the beholder! How worthy of imitation! How calculated to inspire with heroical devotedness to the cause of Christ! What zeal, activity, energy, firmness, intrepidity and resolution in happiest alliance with prudence, conciliation, and affection do I contemplate in the noble Apostle of the Gentiles! In tumults, imprisonments, perils, he is yet the courageous, undaunted and triumphant herald of the cross. Lord, may such a spirit rest upon all Thy Ministers.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Isaiah Chap. 63.

O Lord, Thou art the Everlasting God. Thou art the Creator of Heaven and earth. Whatever exists in the im-

ment of space acknowledges Thee for its Author and Proprietor. Thou hast created all things for Thyself, to show forth Thy glory, and that eternal purpose they will fulfil.

It is Jehovah, in Thy dealing with the children of men as a Covenant God that Thou art most interesting and endearing. While I am awed and most deeply humbled because of Thy Majesty and purity, I am also sweetly drawn and lovingly attracted by Thy compassion and goodness. Lord, Thou emancipatest and restorest the poor sinner by the finished work of Thy Beloved Son.

How happy are they who are thus saved ! Through faith they experience pardon, justification, and peace. O God, make me a full partaker of the benefits of this new, well ordered, and everlasting Covenant. Blot out all mine iniquities, heal all my diseases, redeem my life from destruction, crown me with loving-kindness and tender mercy. May even my common and Providential blessings be sweetened and sanctified as coming through the Channel of the Covenant.

God of all grace, make me faithful to my obligations to love and to live to Thee. I thank Thee for the peace, rest, and protection of the past night. For the morning's mercies and comforts I thank Thee. Be graciously with me throughout the day. Bless my companions with Thy loving favour and pardoning mercy. Bless beloved kindred and friends. Bless with increase of grace the Spiritual Israel whom Thou hast gathered from the lands and from among sailors. They shall come from the East, West, North, and South, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. May I and mine be bound-up with this Israel of God. Grant also, God of Israel, that Israel according to the flesh may soon form a most illustrious portion of the Spiritual Israel. "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion ! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."*

Blessed Lord, as the tide of time is rapidly carrying me to the Ocean of eternity, O may I number my days so as to apply my heart unto wisdom. How swiftly am I sailing to the

end of the voyage of life ! Another sea-voyage will soon, I trust, in Thy kind Providence be accomplished. May I be advancing in a meetness for that world where, according as I now sow, I shall then reap. Make me more and more diligent, meek and holy. And graciously accept of me through Jesus Christ. Amen.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY,
EVENING PRAYER, WEDNESDAY.

Read Acts Chap. 23.

Infinitely Wise and Gracious God, Thou hast been pleased so to reveal Thyself to Thy intelligent creatures upon earth as that they can understand something of Thy glorious perfections and greatness. The full reality and array no created intelligence can comprehend. Glory be to Thy Great Name that Thou hast unfolded so much to man.

Thou inhabitest the immensity of space, Thou pervadest the universe, Thou art the Omnipotent Ruler and Disposer of every creature, Thou art the omniscient, faithful, and true Witness of the springs of action and the deeds of every human being. There is no darkness or shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. And there is no place or time or position in this world where Thou canst not be sought and found of the contrite suppliant.

When assailed by the depravity and enmity of unrenewed men, I am often, O Lord, ready to cry out, "Oh that I had wings like a dove ! for then would I fly away and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." But faith, obedience, and filial love call upon me rather to listen to Thy word of unutterable truth, "Cast Thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee : He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

I praise Thee, Almighty God, for Thy kind, Paternal Providence. It watcheth over me from day to day, and during the darkness and slumbers of night. How great hath been Thy goodness towards me ! Thou hast given me, I trust, to be a participator of the "true riches." Thou hast

enabled me to buy "the pearl of great price," "gold tried in the fire." Thou hast also given me experimentally to know the truth of Thy Word, that "Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Thou hast made me to dwell safely. Thou hast kept me in "great peace" Thou hast preserved me even when most exposed on ship-board to peril and the grave.

For these and all Thine innumerable blessings, God and Father of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I would now devoutly praise Thee. Pardon all my sins for the sake of the Atonement. By Thy Word and Spirit and Providence may I be nurtured and matured in holiness. Make me meet for Thy eternal Kingdom and glory. O visit also with this happiness loved kindred and friends. Graciously revive Thy Church. May she break forth on the right hand and on the left. Have mercy upon all men. In Thy keeping, Good Lord, I now leave me. Do for me exceeding abundantly above all that I can ask or think for Jesus' sake. Amen.

THIRTIETH DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read Psalms 59, 60 and 61.

With deepened gratitude and solemnity would I on this new morning approach the footstool of Thy Throne, O Thou who art not only God of the Cherubim, but also the God of man, yea, who art my God. I adore Thee for the Everlasting Covenant of Redemption, and for the relation in which it causes me to stand to Thee, the God of the Covenant. Thou art in it revealed as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in Him the reconciled God and most loving Father of every believer in Thy Son. How precious is Thy Divine grace! Thanks be to God for His Un-speakable Gift.

Thy kind Providence seems this day to call upon me, O Thou Preserver of men, to review in some measure the goodness and the mercy which Thou hast been making to pass before me. Not only hast Thou sustained me from day to day,

and been making the outgoings of the morning and the incomings of the evening to rejoice over me; Thou hast also made our voyage safe and prosperous. We have now the hope of soon seeing again the land, and of arriving at our desired port. Do Thou still defend us from evil. May no accident befall us in nearing the shore. May we all feel how greatly we are called upon to praise Thee for Thy goodness. By Thy omnipotent care over us we have sailed securely; there hath been no loss of any man's life among us. We have been protected from pirates, robbers, and every enemy that might have assailed or hurt us. We have not been injured either by the intempercy of the weather or the violence of the stormy wind. In health and gladness of heart, we trust, we shall soon reach our homes on shore.

If spared once more to see and embrace our loved relations and friends, O teach us to give glory to Thee, God of our lives, the God of love and peace. May our affections be purified, spiritualized and elevated. While we are kind and dutiful to kindred upon earth, may we be taught to love supremely that Friend in Heaven who sticketh closer than a brother. May we secure *His* friendship from whom neither sea nor land, death nor life, time nor eternity shall ever be able to separate us. O may we be Christ's for ever and ever.

I ought to resolve, Heavenly Father, to be Thine more than ever. I would say in the language of Thy Word, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I. For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings. For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name."^a

Most Gracious God, I earnestly supplicate Thy Spirit and Thy presence to be with me and in my soul this day. Ever more may I live godly in Christ Jesus. Suffer me not at any time to be ashamed of His Cross. May it be my happiness

to be able to say, "To me to live is Christ and to die unspeakable gain." Whatever I do, may I do it as unto the Lord. And unto Thee, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, shall be all glory, world without end. Amen.

THIRTIETH DAY,

EVENING PRAYER, THURSDAY.

Read Acts Chap. 26th.

Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou shouldst visit him? What am I that Thou shouldst have mercy on me and bless me? I am a stranger before Thee and a sojourner as were my fathers; my days on earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

Adored be the God of all grace and consolation for the encouragement held out in the glorious Gospel to sinners. Through Jesus Christ whom the glad tidings announce, I have boldness to come unto Thee. I would now, relying upon this Divine Mediator, draw nigh with profoundest veneration and unfeigned love. Most anxious am I to worship "in the beauty of holiness." I desire to show forth Thy loving-kindness in the morning and Thy faithfulness every night. May Thy Spirit rest upon me that I may acceptably serve Thee.

Enable me, Almighty God, ever to joy in Thee through Jesus Christ, my Lord. By Him Thou wilt "reconcile all things unto Thyself whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven." I rejoice in this immaculate Saviour as the Lord my righteousness. Prepare me for the future. Prepare me for death and the coming of the Judge. And prepare me for the resurrection to life eternal. I triumph in the assurance of this blessed and glorious resurrection. He, who hath made me by His grace what I am, will have a desire for the work of His hands. My corruptible body shall then put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. O my Restorer, Thy image in my soul will then be perfect and glorious.

Strengthen me with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man. May Christ dwell in my heart by faith. Rooted and grounded in love, may I be able to comprehend with all saints what is

the breadth and length, and depth and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that I may be filled with all the fulness of God.

Lord, take away every enemy out of my soul. Let no sin be encouraged or retained. Let none lurk in concealment within. Pardon the sins of the past day. Wherein I have offended by temper, impatience, the tongue, the spirit of the world, or selfishness, O blot out my guilt for Jesus' sake. Remember not against me my failures, omissions and sinful deeds.

It may be, God of my life and length of my days, that this is the last night that I shall sleep at sea before again seeing the refreshing shore. I praise Thee, Creator and Preserver of all things, for the green earth, the busy mart, the populous city, for rural scenes and waving fields, and for social intercourse with all its happy associations. Praised be the Lord for all His goodness. "The sea is Thine and Thou madest it; and Thine hands formed the dry land." Wherever I may be, God of my salvation, let me be ever with Thee. I now this night commit me to Thy tender, watchful and holy keeping. Do great and gracious things for me above all that I am able to ask or think for the sake of Thy Beloved Son. Amen.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY,

MORNING PRAYER, FRIDAY.

Read Psalms 62 and 63.

O Lord, do Thou enable me now to offer unto Thee that praise of the upright which is "comely" in Thy sight. Hitherto, O mighty God of Jacob, hast Thou helped me. I have wanted no good thing. How admirable are Thy Providential arrangements! Thou hast scattered, wherever the dwellings of men are, Thy most valuable bounties. Thou hast thus given water which sustains, refreshes, and cleanses; also the free air of heaven. These and other like precious gifts Thou hast rendered common to all Thy creatures. It is in wisdom and mercy that Thou hast not brought luxuries and rare productions within the reach of men in general.

Whilst, O Bounteous and Gracious Parent, Thou hast made grass to grow for the cattle and food for the service of man over all the world, Thou hast done yet greater things for man's precious but polluted soul. Thou hast given Thine own Son, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, to be the Saviour of mankind. How conspicuously are the riches of Thy grace displayed in Christ! He is the Saviour of the ends of the earth and of those that are far off upon the sea. May He be my Saviour in all the fulness of His power, willingness, and love. Believing in Him, I know that I shall not perish but have everlasting life.

I thank Thee, O God, that my eyes do once more behold the pleasant land. I hope soon to be permitted to go on shore and to enjoy the endearments of home. Keep me ever in Thy love and fear. Whether I eat or drink, whatever I do, may I seek to do all to Thy glory.

I look forward with delight to the privileges of Zion. "O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee; my soul thirsteth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the Sanctuary. Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee. Thus will I bless Thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips; when I remember Thee upon my bed and meditate upon Thee in the night-watches."*

And now, Heavenly Father, I beseech Thee to grant me richly of Thy grace and Spirit. Never leave, never forsake me. All my hope is in Jehovah. Listen to the voice of my humble prayer and answer me in peace for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

* Psalm 63, 1-6.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY,**EVENING PRAYER, FRIDAY.***Read Acts Chap. 27 and 28.*

O Lord my God, with humble gratitude, joy, and praise, would I this evening appear before Thee. May my prayer ascend unto Thee and the prostration of the whole man be as the evening sacrifice. May I find acceptance in and through my Blessed Saviour and Mediator.

Thou hast brought me in peace and safety, O Shepherd of Israel, to the close of another day, and to the termination of another voyage. Thou ridest upon the wings of the wind and controllest the sea and all the works of Thy hand. What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits bestowed upon me? I am now entering, for at least a brief season, upon the enjoyment of precious Christian privileges and social happiness. I would say to my soul, "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth all His praise? Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that keepeth righteousness at all times. Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy Salvation; That I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance."*

Accept, Most Gracious God, of my tribute of grateful homage and thanksgiving for Thy goodness. Bless abundantly to me my present sojourn on shore. Forbid that I shall be overcome by the Tempter and yield to his devices. Keep me, King of Zion, from dishonouring Thee, grieving Thy Spirit, and injuring my own soul and the souls of others by folly and sin. O that there may be no iniquity found in me. May I redeem the time because the days are evil. I am favoured by Thy providence, O may I grow in grace and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

* Psalm 106, 1-6.

Vouchsafe to keep me this week without sin. When I sleep, may my heart wake. May my repose be healthful, sweet, and hallowed. May even my dreams be devout.

I commend earnestly to Thee my shipmates who may also be rejoicing in the joys of home. O God, keep them from evil and the Evil One. May they be better and not worse for the opportunities afforded them in a land of ordinances. Let not Satan or any of His agents, their own evil hearts and propensities, or any enemy whatever, ruin their souls.

Sanctify to me, O Lord, the means of Grace, dispensations of Providence, prosperity, adversity, the experience of the sea and of the land, for my complete salvation, and finally bring me to Thy Heavenly Kingdom and Glory through Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory everlasting. Amen.

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FIRST SUNDAY.

Let us worship God by singing to His praise in the 7th Paraphrase at the 3rd Verse.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, with profound reverence would we now approach Thy august presence. We feel the awful disparity that separates between Thy purity and our vileness. We feel that we are not worthy to be permitted to adore Thee, and seek Thy love.

O God, the wicked are wont to say unto Thee, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto Him? It may be, O Thou Omniscient One, that such has in days past been the language of our hearts and minds. Pardon for the sake of Jesus, Thy Beloved Son, this and all our sin. We trust that Thou art teaching us now another language, and bringing us into a better state of heart and mind.

We would draw nigh unto Thee, rejoicing that Thou art inviting us to Thyself as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Thou hast revealed Him to us as our Advocate with Thee, the Father. He hath taught His disciples to come unto Thee, saying, "Our Father". O grant that by the good aid of His Holy Spirit each of us may be enabled to say unto Thee with faith and loving devotion, *My Father.*

We rejoice in Thy everlasting love, O Lord, as set forth in the mission of Thy Son. We rejoice in His condescension

and affection to the poor and the guilty. He hath left it on record that "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." We rejoice in the regard that He manifested to those who were connected with the sea. We are the more encouraged by it to cast our souls upon Him, to trust solely in His blood and righteousness for pardon and holiness. He came in the name of the Lord to save us. How precious is Thy grace! "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings!" May we with all earnestness, simplicity, and godly sincerity seek unto Thee, Thou Divine Redeemer, as all our salvation and all our desire.

Bless us, we beseech Thee, Heavenly Father, as now to be engaged in sacred exercises. Borne up as we are upon the bosom of the great deep, we delight to believe that we are upheld by Thy power and goodness, for "the sea is Thine, and Thou madest it." Thou art the God of the sea as well as of the dry land. The universe is Thy temple. Thou pervadest all space. Thou fillest immensity with Thy presence. May our frail bark, that is being wafted on the billows of the Ocean, be to us a temple consecrated by Thy presence. May it be to us Bethel,—the house of God,—the gate of Heaven.

How animating, O Lord, is the intimation of the inspired Seer, "For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."†

Lord, bless and pity us. Shine on us with the light of Thy countenance. Give us individually to know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, whom to know is life eternal. Be most graciously present with us on the present occasion. May the preaching of Thy Word prove the wisdom of God in our salvation. And to Thy Name, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, shall be all the glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

* Psalm 37, 7.

† Isaiah 57, 15.

Let us read Lamentations, Chapter 1.

Let us sing Psalm 137, 1.

Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

SERMON.

JONAH, CHAPTER 1.

Several of the inspired writers are remarkable for peculiarity in their endowments, disposition, and character. Thus the Book of Job abounds with pathos, the Psalms with poetry of a description to move the profoundest feelings of a child of God; we have the sublimity of Isaiah and of "Amos who was among the herdmen of Tekoa," together with the plaintive outpourings and admirable fidelity of the grace-constraining, weeping Jeremiah. We have also the unvarnished and sternly truthful relation of the disobedience of the prophet who is now to engage our attention.

Though Jonah is not distinguished for either natural amiableness or for eminence as a partaker of Spiritual life, it should be borne in mind that the Book before us, of which he was probably the writer, records with a severe and undisguising fidelity, not to be met with out of the Holy Scriptures, the sins and faults of "the disobedient prophet." The incidental notice of him, which occurs in 2nd Kings 14, 25, speaks to his honour. It is there said of the second Jeroboam that "He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the Sea of the Plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He spake by the hand of His servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gat's-hepher." It should also be remembered that the narrative before us comprises in all likelihood but a small portion of even the prophetic life of Jonah.

There is a garbled account of the story of Jonah in the Koran, and the Mohammedans to this day, after the example of their Founder, hold this prophet in great estimation. The wonderful occurrences of the inspired narrative have also been introduced with modifications into some of the fables of Heathen Mythology.

That the occurrences recorded actually happened, and that the account is not an allegory, is proved by the use our Lord makes of the history. He contrasts the praiseworthy conduct of the Ninevites, who received Jonah as a prophet and most fully believed his message, though attested only by himself, with the dishonest, impious, and blasphemous people of Israel who rejected and condemned the Holy One of God, though He came preaching truths more benignant and sublime, and accredited with miracles more marvellous and admirable by far than were those which attested the commission of Jonah to Nineveh. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For, as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with this generation and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas is here." (Matt. 12, 39, 41.) Upon another occasion the same Divine reprover said to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas." (Matt. 16, 3, 4.) The fact then of Jonah's supernatural imprisonment constituting a type of Christ's entombment in the rich man's sepulchre, is a satisfactory demonstration that the account should be literally understood. When any event is regarded as symbolical of another, nothing is clearer than that the primordial is believed to have really occurred, just as a parable, illustration or simile, must have an actual foundation in the simple reality upon which it is based.

Jonah is here introduced receiving a mandate to go to the

kingdom of Assyria as the Ambassador of Jehovah, the God of Israel. His charge was to denounce its great wickedness with the threatened judgements of the Almighty. "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the Son of Amittai, saying, Go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me." (v. 1, 2.) The prophet however was not at all disposed to yield obedience to this command. On the contrary he was resolved by every means in his power to escape from the duty enjoined him to discharge. We are told at verse 3rd, "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

Thus did this sinning servant wish to be released from the obligation imposed upon him by his Divine Master. He would not repair to a strange, an idolatrous, and a wicked population, ripe for judgement. But why was he unwilling to go? Is it not the honour and the happiness of a child of God ever to act upon the spirit implied and breathed in the words, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth?" Is not this the case whether that which is required be pleasant and agreeable or otherwise? Nothing is more certain than that it is:

Why then was Jonah averse to his mission; it might be of mercy or of judgement? We hear the naturally timid, the depressed, the wailing Jeremiah exclaiming, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!" Nor do we greatly wonder at this when we listen to the commission which he received from the Most High. "See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant."^o Was it under the influence of such feelings as those experienced by the tender and weeping prophet that Jonah was so anxious not to visit the Assyrians? Ah! no. To motives far less honourable his aversion must be ascribed. Had he been

* Jeremiah 16, 10 and 1, 10.

a man with the delicate feelings, the warm sympathies, and the loving heart of "the Son of Hilkiah;" and, had he sought the same Divine grace as that endeared patriot and man of God asked and obtained, then doubtless would he have acted in a similar manner with Jeremiah, who after all is a model of courage and obedience to God. But the dislike of Jonah to the service commanded must be traced to a different source. Far from entertaining deep sorrow for the unhappy city against which he was required to pronounce impending woe and destruction, unless its doom were averted by timely repentance, the preacher, knowing the forbearance and tender mercy of the God of Israel, feared that after all the calamity and wrath, that were ready to descend upon Nineveh, might be prevented. In consequence he sought to decline going thither at all. So he himself afterwards declared when he had been made the unwilling instrument of Nineveh's salvation. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray Thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I know that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil." (Chap. 4, 1, 2.)

It was then selfishness and self-will, pettish, narrow, most unhallowed; a presumptuous and short-sighted dread of being regarded as a false prophet, with perhaps not a little of national prejudice and exclusiveness, that incited the prophet to disobedience. Oh how little, how contemptible, how vile is selfishness! How especially reprehensible in a believer! Such an one ought ever to have *his will, his reputation, his ambition, his honour* entirely consecrated to God. All should be held in subserviency to the glory and law of that Heavenly Parent who hath loosed his bonds, made him to differ, and adopted him into His family. Then it is—when the man has no will but that of his God, when the creature spontaneously and with joyful cheerfulness seeks to be nothing save an expression of the mind of the Creator, when the ransomed sinner views his Redeemer as all and in all,—then it is that

felicity and the true honour of man, the honour that cometh from God, is realized.

In the present instance the very fact of God's commissioning a messenger to go to Nineveh and cry against it indicates His willingness to show mercy to it. That Jonah so understood his embassy is apparent. Alas ! that he should have manifested such hostile spirit ! Easily may he exclaim with one who knew man and human nature well, " Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord ; for very great are His mercies ; but let me not fall into the hand of man."^{*}

" But Jonah rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa." He embarked in a ship bound to Tarsus. He probably thought that, if once he were beyond the bounds of the Holy Land, the Spirit of the Lord would cease to move him. He would by this means avoid Nineveh. But what will he do, once arrived at Tarsus ? How will the Israelite, voluntarily and culpably exiled from that land where Jehovah is known and worshipped, feel, when in contact with Heathenism and Idolatry ? Will his sentiments be totally dissimilar to those of the captives in Babylon, whose mournful experience one of themselves depicts. " By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song ; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ?"[†] Will the fugitive prophet be enabled to cherish such reminiscences, and endeavour with sad and longing desires to be submissive to the Lord in the dispensations of His Providence ? Ah how different, how far from parallel, how opposite the cases ! How devoid might not the unhappy prophet expect to be of those consolations which the involuntary and pious exiles experienced even when they were by the rivers of Babylon !

It is likely that Jonah, who belonged to " Galilee of the Gentiles," which was situated " by the way of the Sea," was

* 1 Chronicles, 21, 13.

† Psalm 137, 1, 4.

not unacquainted with sea-faring people and usages. In seeking "to flee from the presence of the Lord," he at once proceeded to Joppa in order to obtain a passage out of the territory of the Land of Israel. Joppa was a notable port in Judea, and formed the connecting link between it and the Mediterranean. The harbour of Joppa was much used by David and Solomon in their maritime transactions. (It is well known in modern times by the name of Jaffa, and became remarkable for its cruel capture by Bonaparte. There is now a convent of monks there. Though at present one of the worst ports in the Mediterranean, it possesses an ancient harbour capable of great improvement. Its well watered gardens export fruits, among which its water-melons are particularly distinguished.)

At Joppa, we are told, the prophet found a ship going to Tarshish. Concerning this place there have been a variety of opinions. It is perhaps better for us not to enter into this subject at all, farther than to observe that Tarsus in Cilicia, the birth-place of St. Paul, Tunis or Carthage in Africa, and Tartessus in Spain, have had their different advocates. Other suppositions have also obtained. We shall refrain from a discussion that would detain us from our great object, the spiritual bearing and instruction with which the subject is fraught.

It is right to mark the operations of Divine Providence. It has been said that "he who observes providences will never want providences to observe." Yet great caution is requisite in arriving at conclusions as to the warrantableness or goodness of any particular line of conduct from the alleged smile of Providence. "We may be out of the way of duty and yet may meet with a favourable gale." Unless our conduct be in harmony with the Revealed Will of God, all apparently Providential encouragement is impotent to furnish a warrant or proper ground for any given mode of acting.

Providence seemed to favour Jonah in his flight "from the presence of the Lord." No sooner had he arrived at Joppa than he found a ship ready to sail for Tarshish. He was at once received as a passenger; and forthwith the Land of Israel was left behind in the distance. But He, whose

servant Jonah especially was, and whom he was under the strongest obligations to obey, had seen all, and was about to teach the prophet emphatically his error, folly, and sin. "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even, there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."†

We behold the ship of Tarshish spreading her sails to the winds of heaven, gallantly courasing her intended voyage; the breeze is favourable, the master is energetic and worthy of trust, the nautical skill of the seamen is undoubted;—all are conspiring to speed the prophet in his flight. But all will not do. All will fail to accomplish the end he has in view. All shall be made to prove to the Israelitish Seer and his fellow-voyagers that "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord." All will tend to convince both the Jew and the Gentile of the absolute omniscience, the all-pervading presence, and the resistless control of "the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

"But the Lord sent out a great wind 'nto the Sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the Sea, so that the ship was like to be broken," (v. 4.) How different is the language of this verse from that, current both among mariners and landsmen. "Stormy wind fulfilling His Word" is here ascribed directly to its Cause, Jehovah. Surely this ought to be suggestive of salutary conviction. It seems to address men and say, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name." It is true, many things and among them good motives combine to induce the habit of not, in ordinary speaking or

* Job 34, 22.

† Psalm 139, 7-12.

writing, going beyond second causes. We ought however to be aware that in this habit there is great danger of encouraging what may be termed—the *spirit of materialism*, a spirit prevalent in no small degree in our day. The pious and truthful style of the inspired writer of our text is worthy of imitation and serious reflection. When the voyager is met by the threatening storm or overtaken by the dread hurricane, when he experiences the fury of Nature's conflicting elements encircling him, when from the depth of the watery abyss he mounts up to the heavens, let him then, let him there behold the power, grandeur, goodness, and wisdom of that Omnipotent One who "rides upon the whirlwind and directs the storm." And, when life is redeemed from destruction, shall not the Christian sailor of our times adopt the devout resolution of the preserved Monarch, and say, "The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day."* When the Lord maketh the storm a calm to those that go down to the sea in ships, when He bringeth them to their desired haven, "Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders."

The sacred historian ascribes the extraordinary tempest and raging of the sea to the special interposition of Jehovah. The speedy and apparently seasonable falling-in of the prophet with the ship going to Tarsus, his ready reception into her as a passenger, her immediate sailing, the accommodation she offered for rest and sleep to the over-fatigued and exhausted traveller;—all these are simply recorded as facts.

Jonah was willing to be associated with Heathen mariners, "to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." In order to this he had used exceeding exertion and had readily paid the demanded fare for his passage. The whole company had with one consent bid farewell to the Holy Land. How singular is the scene that next presents itself to our notice. "The ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid." And this in consequence of the presence and the sin of an Israelite, of a man of God! The heathen and the unrighteous are often benefited by the

* Isaiah 38, 19.

companionship of a believer. But here it seems, at first sight, as if quite the reverse had obtained. Here was a ship's crew brought to the very verge of destruction because of the presence of one of the Chosen People. By a supernatural storm they appeared to be brought within the grasp of the King of Terrors. They were impressed with the idea that it was no ordinary sea-storm that now threatened to engulf them. Terror and alarm took hold upon them. "Then the mariners were afraid, and cried (vociferated, cried aloud), every man unto his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the Sea, to lighten it of them."

There are those who profess to believe that the Supreme Being is not influenced by man's prayers and that supplication is not otherwise beneficial than in its salutary effects upon the mind of the petitioner. The very light of Nature, dim as are its intimations, condemns this view. Though it be most certainly true that the Lord is unchangeable, it is equally true that He is the Hearer and the Answerer of Prayer. The infinitely intelligent and good Heavenly Parent communes with His intelligent offspring and is affected by their desires. How He harmonizes His immutability with His being moved by the entreaty of the contrite worshipper, He has not told us; we know not; we are not, as presently constituted, capable of knowing. Doubtless to understand this is far beyond the grasp of the most powerful human intellect. That there exists the most perfect concord, every true Christian, nay every enlightened man thoroughly believes. Nay that the Most High has arranged His predestined procedure so that He acts not till the prayer of faith is addressed to Him is a certain and demonstrated verity.

"The mariners cried every man unto his god." Alas! they were as yet in darkness as to the Only True God, the God of the universe, the God of all creatures, places, times and persons, the God of the sea and of the dry land. They knew, however, that it was most becoming to offer earnest and most urgent prayer, even though it were to "the unknown God." Their prayer may have been idolatrous. But may we not rather say that already they were being prepared to "seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and

find Him." Certainly they are very near, at least, to this state of mind, this stage of the transition from death to life.

But let us contemplate the instinct and tradition of Nature in these tempest-tossed, bewildered sailors, whose "soul is melted because of trouble." Distressed, unsophisticated nature, though corrupt, impels men to worship God in such circumstances. "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble." Nor will this solemnized spirit indispose or unfit those, who cherish it, for exerting themselves wisely and promptly with a view to their own safety. It did not so in the case before us. In the men before us we behold the union of devotion and active effort. "Then the mariners were afraid and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the Sea, to lighten it of them." They were not so presumptuous as to rely solely upon their own exertions; they were not so absurd as to suppose that they could be saved without them.

How wonderful are the ways of the God of Salvation! Whether these Heathen seamen had often visited the Land of Israel, or had only just been there for the first time, is uncertain. Belonging to Phoenicia, or some not very distant foreign country, they had considerable acquaintance with Palestine. They understood at once the language of Jonah. But, whatever may have been their opportunities, they had hitherto remained strangers to the love and the homage due to Israel's God. But the time for their effectual calling was now come. Though late in turning from dumb idols to serve the Living God, they were not too late. They had not the happiness of those who from infancy and childhood are taught "the fear of the Lord." Yet in the sovereignty of His grace, they were now received as members of the Household of Faith.

How great is the benefit accruing to those who from their tender years have known savingly the Holy Scriptures? Not only do they start far earlier than those who at a subsequent period of life become the adopted children of God, to run the Heavenly race; they also bring all the improvement and elevation, that uniformly accompany the new birth unto righteous-

ness, to bear upon the whole future life. The years and the early cultivation thus gained are of inestimable value. The whole after-man realizes their beneficial influence. It may however happen, even in respect of these two classes of believers, that "the last shall be first, and the first last." The Phœnician mariner, once enlightened by the Spirit of the Lord, may excel the prophet of Gath-hepher in the graces and riches of the spiritual Israelite. The weather-beaten seaman, whose past life has not been that of a disciple of Christ, may distance and far exceed in holiness the man who in the morning of life began to follow Jesus, if the latter be not sober, vigilant, self-denied and prayerful. "Be not high-minded but fear." The earnestness, devotion, humility, godliness and self-sacrificing charities of the labourer, who has only entered the vineyard at the sixth, ninth, or eleventh hour, may so far excel those, who entered sooner, that they will be accounted the more honourable in the estimation of the Unerring Master and Judge.

We shall hereafter see how the Lord brings good out of evil. The perversity of Jonah was in a sense the cause of the idolatrous mariners of the ship of Tarsus hearing the word of salvation from his lips. Such results strongly testify that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." "Behold thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for He hath glorified thee."

How true is it that all, that a man hath, he will give for his life! We behold a merchant-ship pursuing the business of trade and commerce. She may have been owned by one of those merchants who were "princes." Or the master and men may have been proprietors of the ship and cargo. How promptly do they in the hour of danger, of imperilled life, "cast forth the wares that were in the ship to lighten it of them." And they were right in doing so. They were justified by Divine and human law.

We may here mark the true value of "wares," of merchandise. How they sink in the comparison with the preciousness of human life! And why is mortal existence so highly estimated? Verily because of its bearing upon eternity. Even in this world a single occurrence may have an important sway upon the whole future career. Much more does the summing-up of our existence upon earth tell upon our state in that eternal world where, as the tree falleth, it shall lie, where the filthy will be filthy and the holy will be holy for ever. The consciousness of this, as if written upon the spirit of man by the finger of God, makes the state of the soul at the hour of departure of such incalculable moment to the immortal being, and the time and the territory, where preparation may be made to meet the Supreme and Final Judge, so invaluable.

"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish."* The poor heathens of the trader felt in their peril the need of such consolation as that appropriated by the Psalmist. "They that are far from the Lord shall perish." But He was bringing those humble and earnest men to Himself by a way which they knew not. There is much in their seriousness, prayerfulness, and simplicity, in their teachableness and progress, fitted to instruct, worthy of imitation. Will not their conduct rise up in the judgement against many seamen and landmen too? Resolve, O sinner, in this the day of possible and offered salvation,—
"But it is good for me to draw nigh to God." Draw nigh for thyself. Prayer in order to be effectual must be from the individual. The seamen before us cried, every man unto his god, and every man for himself as well as all collectively. Make God thy friend, and thou needest not fear the tornado, the hurricane, or the tempest. In Christ, God is waiting to be gracious. Seek Him in prayer. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Cast away "the wares" that endanger thy soul. Depart from all iniquity. Put from thee all thy sins. Without this, prayer is a mockery, an insult to the Almighty.

* Psalm 73, 26.

Voyager to eternity, nothing is more certain than that thou hast a God. But is the True and Living God *thy* God? Who but He can help in the hour of dread calamity? When death, judgement, and eternity are being disclosed to thee, in whom dost thou expect to trust? O make Jehovah the God of the spiritual Israelite, thy friend now. "Acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace." Enter into covenant with Him through Jesus, the Covenant-Head and Representative of the sinner in the Covenant of Salvation. Know God in His love, as the God of life eternal to thee. Crave adoption in and through His Only-begotten and Well-beloved Son. "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (John 17, 3).

Let us pray.

We again, Almighty Parent, take avail of Thy gracious warrant, and present ourselves at the footstool of the Throne in the name of Thy Only Begotten and Well-beloved Son. May the instruction of Thy Holy Word and the preaching of Thy Blessed Truth be savingly beneficial to our souls. Thou alone art to be worshipped and glorified by every creature. Thou art worthy to receive our supreme homage. Unto Thee we desire to surrender the entire affections of our hearts; unto Thee would we cheerfully consecrate our lives.

Heavenly Father, the contemplation of Thy character and procedure with the children of men is fitted to inspire us both with joy and solemnity. How wonderful art Thou in counsel, how excellent in working! "Thy merey, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy House; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures."*

* Psalm 36, 5-8.

May we O God of Salvation, be profited individually and collectively by what has been recorded in Thy Blessed Word respecting Jonah and the mariners with whom he sailed. We adore Thee that Thou canst bring good out of evil. Thou didst overrule the disobedience of Thy sinning servant so as to make it conducive to the poor Heathen seamen receiving the knowledge of Saving Truth. We trust, Gracious God, that they were made partakers of the blessedness of the true Israel. In Thy Divine Providence they were called to become Thy accepted worshippers. May our meditations respecting them be blessed to our eternal good. Forbid that they, who had fewer privileges than we have, should hereafter rise in the judgement and condemn us. O may we, like them, be serious, earnest, prayerful, and attentive to duty. By the instrumentality of the prophet Thou didst bring them to repentance. When we listen to the Gospel of Christ, when we hear the loving invitations of Jesus to repair to Him as weary and heavy-laden sinners, Oh! may we feel that a greater than Jonah is here. To-day, "while it is called to-day," may we obey His voice, lest any of us be hardened to perdition by the deceitfulness of sin. As "the mariners cast forth the wares that were in the ship" for their lives, so may we our sins. Enable us to put away from us the unclean thing and all our sins. May life, so incalculably precious, be henceforth by us dedicated unto Him that loved us and bought us with His blood.

We pray for our lawful sovereign, the Queen. Establish her heart in Thy love. Uphold her throne by Thy mercy. Bless her Majesty's Royal Consort, and all the members of the Royal Family. Bless all in authority under the Queen and over us. Bless our country with national prosperity and above all with True Religion. May the people praise Thee O Lord, may all the people praise Thee. Have mercy upon all men. Bless especially those who go down to the sea in ships. Possess them with Thy fear and love. May we render honour to whom honour is due. May we do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. And the glory we shall ascribe to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 139, 7.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all."
Amen.

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SECOND SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 7.

Let us pray.

May we now be enabled, O Lord, our Maker and Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, to approach Thy presence this day with sincere and longing desires for nearness to Thee. Coming in the name of our Only Advocate and High Priest, may our communion and fellowship be with Thee the Father, and with Thy Son Christ Jesus. Teach us the experience of Thy servant who could say, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42, 1, 2).

We are prone to depart from Thee, the Fountain of living waters, and to hew out for ourselves broken cisterns which can hold no water. Our corrupt nature, our deceitful hearts, our ungodly inclinations, ever prompt us to depart from Thee, the God of holiness, and to worship and serve the creature or some idol "more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." Oh, how often have we said unto Thee in effect, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy way!" This day would we mourn over our sins, and repent us of them all, and take hold by faith of Thy Only Begotten Son, as an atoning sacrifice, and the Lord our righteousness. We desire deeply to feel our own weakness as well as sinfulness. May we also, each for himself, be enabled to say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." (Isaiah 45, 24). Thou art addressing every unregenerate sinner among us and saying, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5, 14). Oh! that such a word may be accompanied with the power of the Spirit to the heart and conscience. And, if there be any of us who hath tasted and seen that Thou art

good, but who has become carnal and is asleep in his backsliding, may he this day hear Thy rebuke—"What meanest thou, O sleeper, arise, call upon thy God." Apart or at a distance from Thee, there is no life, but the soul is spiritually dead. To Thee therefore, O Thou Fountain of life, do we now seek for spiritual and eternal life. We hear Thy Blessed Son, our Saviour, proclaiming the fulness and power of Thy grace when He says, "Ask and ye shall receive; Seek, and ye shall find; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "For every one that asketh receiveth and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." May we know all this in our happy experience.

For this purpose be pleased abundantly to bless us on the present occasion. Teach us to worship Thee "in the beauty of holiness." Teach the mariner to "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar and the fulness thereof." (Psalm 96, 10, 11). May Thy Word this day have free course and be glorified, at sea and on shore, wherever it is preached or read. May it be so in our sanctification. And the glory we shall ascribe to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, World without end. Amen.

Let us sing in Psalm 89, 29.

Let us read Psalm 89.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah I. 5.

We have seen how the prophet resisted the mandate and declined the commission to "go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it." From the port of Joppa he took his passage in a ship which probably was one of the regular traders of the day and which carried passengers. His object was to go "unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." What a spectacle is here presented to our contemplation! A child of God, and one called to the prophetic office, indig-

ing the spirit of grievous disobedience, lapsing into the state of a wilful backslider. The great change of spiritual renovation, of being turned from darkness to light, had been effected in Jonah's soul. How sad, how inconsistent, how unworthy in him to evince perverse self-will and waywardness! But will he indeed thus escape? Will he overcome in the contest upon which he has ventured? Will he that contendeth with the Almighty prosper? And especially will a rebellious and a backsliding prophet be permitted to dishonour God with impunity? We shall see. The narrative proceeds.

"But the Lord sent out a great wind into the Sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the Sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the Sea, to lighten it of them." Where now was the prophet? What had become of the passenger during all the crying to Heaven and the strenuous exertions of the terror-struck crew of the ship? Alas! the exile who had chosen expatriation, association with idolaters, and to "flee from the presence of the Lord," the guilty cause of all the danger, alarm, and suffering that had overtaken the ship of Tarshish,—is least of all alive to the peril and awful solemnity of the circumstances into which his sin in particular had brought both himself and his fellow-voyagers. In truth he is as unconcerned as the dead is about either his own safety or that of his companions. Overcome and exhausted with fatigue, anxiety, and excitement, the fugitive is altogether unconscious of the storm. That most extraordinary tempest had told upon the most experienced and courageous of the seamen. It had naturally and with propriety, as well as in accordance with their wonted notions, suggested to the minds of these simple and serious heathens the idea of the Divine wrath and displeasure. "But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay and was fast asleep."

* Was in a deep sleep, was entranced, was overwhelmed with sleep.—See the same word in Psalm 76, 6, Daniel 8, 18, Genesis 15, 12.

What an emblem have we here of the sinner dead in trespasses and sins! The light of Nature, and man's observation of the Divine general government of the world, proclaim, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth." (Psalm 59, 11.) The Word of Inspired Truth urgently presses upon us the august consideration, that besides all the recompense, which even in the present life is in Providence awarded, there is a day of most awful and unspeakably tremendous retribution rapidly impending, which will usher the impenitent sinner into an undone eternity. It employs with respect to that day such language as this, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." (2 Thessalonians 1, 7). But all this does not impress or quicken or awake the spiritually dead. Neither the love of Christ and His tender beseechings, nor "the terror of the Lord," can persuade or prevail with such a sinner. No, not though such words of awful truth are sounded in his ears as "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5, 14). "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." (Psalm 58, 3). In vain, as respects such, are any of their fellow-voyagers on life's tempestuous and troubled sea alarmed for their sin and danger; in vain are they warned on the one hand, and besought on the other, to flee from the wrath to come; in vain the voice of conscience, the Word of God, and the instructive occurrences of life with which they are connected, unite in proclaiming the solemn necessity that exists for turning to the Lord and seeking safety in harmony with Him through union to the Son of His love. The trump of the Archangel

may have sounded and the dead in Christ been raised, but not till the voice speaks, which the doubly dead shall hear, will many, many such awake to the dread reality of their ruined and hopeless condition; not till the sentence of final and irretrievable condemnation is pronounced upon them by that Judge, whom, when offered to them as a Saviour, they had impiously rejected, will they believe. They will then, like the devils, "believe and tremble."

It will be otherwise with those whom God hath called, and chosen, and sanctified. They may degenerate into temporary and crying backsliding, and for this they will be disciplined and made to feel with godly sorrow that their sin is exceedingly sinful. To every such one the language of their offended Father is such as this, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of Hosts."* The principle, upon which Jehovah proceeds, He thus states in connection with the Head of the Church and Man's Representative in the Covenant of Redemption.—"If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgements; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."†

Thus does the God, whose love is everlasting and unchangeable, deal with His wayward and undutiful children. He may rebuke them by the ungodly, the ignorant, the heathen. He did so in the instance of Jonah. How appropriate to him is the reproof of the shipmaster! The tempest had so affected the mariners that "they cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay and was fast asleep. So

* Jeremiah 2, 19.

† Psalm 89, 30, 34.

the shipmaster came to him and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper ? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." This language implies the conviction that every human being is bound to recognise Religion and worship the Deity. How this is to be done, it does not tell us ; and man, whose natural sentiment it expresses, cannot, unless enlightened with other than natural light, inform us. How dark and uncertain, and perplexed is man, intelligent and earnest man, without the Revealed Will of God, without " the Holy Scriptures." Probably the master of the vessel believed in gods many, all subordinate to One Supreme God. That there was a Sovereign Power that could rescue him, his crew, and passenger from the terrific gale which every moment threatened to engulf them in the unfathomed deep, he believed. He was also satisfied that every man ought to do homage to some god ; who or what that god should be, he does not seem to have considered of paramount importance. He would choose for himself to whom he would cry, and he willingly conceded the same right to every other individual. His sailors acted upon this view when the ship was like to be broken. " Then the mariners were afraid and cried every man unto his god." In this the master wished that Jonah also should join. " Arise, call upon thy God," said he to him. While in all this there is something to approve, yet how lamentably far is such religion from the Truth. And, where the Truth may be arrived at, if properly sought after, to adopt, retain, or sink down into such views is highly sinful. Obviously then, in so far as modern Liberalism in Religion is identical with such Idolatry or Pantheism, it is far more dishonouring to the True God, and insulting to Him, than the religion of the mariners and of the master with whom Jonah was sailing. They had not hitherto, we believe, enjoyed many advantages for knowing the Truth of God. How they improved the goodness of the Lord to them, when they were taught to serve and worship Him, the history will show. Will not their earnest, candid, and pious devotion to the God of Israel condemn those who hide the Truth in unrighteousness, indifference, and worldliness, in whom the light is darkness, who love not the Truth, the Truth as it is in Jesus ?

How dark, how unsatisfactory, how far from affording confidence and comfort is the shipmaster's religion ! He admonishes Jonah to awake, arise, and call upon his God, adding, "if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not." How well does this accord with the declaration of the Psalmist, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols. (Psalm 97, 7). How different all this from the faith, the hope, the peace, the trust of the disciples of Jesus ! They are taught by the Apostle, "all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours ; And ye are Christ's ; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3, 21.)

We behold in Jonah the impersonation of a backslider from God. To understand clearly and vividly what this is, we must remember what a child of God is. This the backslider has been and still is. He is not "an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the Covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." (Ephesians 2, 12.) See him in the day of his espousals and first love. Behold him with joyful ardour and devotion entering upon the Heaven-ward race that he has to run. Does Jesus speak to him ? Surely his reply is like that of the bride, "The voice of my Beloved." From wandering like a lost sheep he has returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls. The glory of God is now the object for which he wishes to live. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him. The whole man is characterized by entire and increasing self-consecration to the God of his salvation. What a contrast have we here to the unrenewed, the natural man ! With unbroken selfishness, he lives not to God but to himself. Self being his idol, he is opposed to the authority and honour of Jehovah. He dislikes the holiness of His nature and law, has no relish for His service, and sets his affections upon earthly things.

Mark now the backslider, as seen in Jonah. He has fallen from his dutiful and loving allegiance to God. For the present the carnal mind and the will of the flesh are in the ascendant. He will give to the winds what he owes

to both God and man. His own ideas, ease, honour, reputation, appear to him of such moment that, to secure them, he will risk the Divine displeasure and peril the best welfare of his fellow-men. Such is the backslider. Such you perceive Jonah to have been. And, if, as was probably his case, the rebellious child be yet conscious of his adoption and lose not the sense of having been accepted by the God of love, a sort of spiritual pride will infuse itself into his soul, leading him to undervalue the society of believers, and to disregard the souls of sinners ready to perish. He will contest or misconstrue the providential dealings of the Almighty, until, wearied with the struggle he has been vainly endeavouring to sustain, he becomes profoundly regardless both of his danger and sin. The Lord, however, whose he is, will not let him alone, nor will He suffer him to ruin the precious souls of those who are connected with him. He will send forth the messengers of His displeasure; stormy winds will fulfil His word; the unregenerate and the heathen will be made to reprove him. For what will they think of him in the day when themselves, alarmed and in danger of ruin, are crying out, What must we do to be saved?—when they witness a professor, a teacher of True Religion, unconcerned, asleep? Will they not say to him, “What meanest thou, O sleeper?” And, when many methods may have failed to bring back the rebel to a sense of duty and render him alive to a sense of his guilt, this reproof may be overruled by the God of sovereign grace for the recovery of the backslider and the calling forth of new life, and for bringing the sinner to renewed repentance.

“What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not.” The shipmaster’s alarm and rebuke proved salutary and seasonable. Jonah was now aroused, and became alive to the conviction of his sin and of imminent peril. He joined the solemnized and spirit-prostrate mariners, now “at their wit’s end.” How august and awe-inspiring are the circumstances of this company! They feel more profoundly than does the mathematician the truth of his demonstration, that all hope of safety from their own exertions, strength, and wisdom, is vain. The cry of the believer to the Omnipotent

is then a fitting expression of those whose soul is melted because of trouble. "Give us help from trouble : for vain is the help of man." (Psalm 60, 11.)

Both master and men were persuaded that the Most High was dealing with them in this extraordinary manner, dealing with them for sin, and for sin of a description so aggravated as to have provoked such a visitation. Under the influence of this conviction, they proposed to each other to appeal solemnly to the Great Arbiter of right and wrong to single out the guilty party. They probably intended to sacrifice the offender, that the rest might be saved. They took their appeal by means of the lot. "The lot is cast into the lap ; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 16, 33). The Heathen sailors appear to have known this and to have acted upon it. How much instruction may be derived from their conduct and the information of the Word of God. If Christians may ever in any circumstances have recourse to the casting of lots, surely it is clear that it ought to be with great solemnity and devotion. And it must be an extreme case that will warrant it at all. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." The poor mariners had arrived at this. With the light of the Holy Scriptures and the means of grace and knowledge within the power of the disciple of Jesus, it is scarcely possible that he can ever be entitled to ask such a sign from Heaven as the indication from God by the lot. In general, and perhaps without exception, the way is, to draw nigh in prayer and supplicate to Jehovah whatever we want, —wisdom, direction, counsel, strength, deliverance, whatever may be needful. The comfort of the seed of Jacob is that the Hearer of prayer never suffers any of them to seek His face in vain. His own Word is, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." (Psalm 50, 15). So far then from Christianity allowing its adherents to cast lots for amusement, as at the card-table or for secular purposes, it is doubtful if in almost any instance, even the most solemn, they should be employed.

That the Heathen before us acted right in giving forth the lot, there is no reason to doubt. Having summoned all on board together, and having supplicated the Great Power, that

rules the wind and the sea, to have compassion on them, the commander also insisted upon the presence of the stranger, so singular in every thing pertaining to him. He "had now joined them on deck, and they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah." He was thus in their estimation pointed out by the Omniscient as the cause of their calamity. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us." Perhaps it immediately occurred to them that he was stained with the guilt of blood, that he was a murderer. This was the view taken by the barbarians who saw the venomous beast hang upon Paul's hand. They "said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." (Acts 28, 4).

To such a position had disobedience and backsliding brought the prophet. He might have been now honourably occupied at Nineveh, threatening the judgements of the God of holiness upon its guilty inhabitants and inculcating timely repentance. But instead of this we behold him singled out by the decision of the Lord in the presence of those who knew not the True God, as the cause of their danger and of their being on the very verge of a watery grave. How unhappy, how degrading is sin,—is rebellion, self-will, carnality, in a child of God! O believer, learn thy true felicity and dignity in self-denial, in honouring the Lord, keeping ever near Him, cheerfully following His commands, living not to thyself but to Him that loved thee and gave Himself for Thee.

"What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not." This solemn remonstrance and appeal of the shipmaster may aptly suggest the protest that is being noted by perishing sinners against the indifference and lukewarmness of the professing worshippers of Jenovah. Let them reflect upon the awful condition of the multitudes and the millions who are passing into eternity without knowing the Only True God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. Let them reflect upon the claims that those poor brethren, "sitting in darkness and

in the region and shadow of death" have upon them. For what purpose hath God so highly favoured individuals and communities and nations with the light of divine life! Is it merely for themselves, or for their own limited good? This in substance was the view which Jonah sought to cherish. This was the disposition which characterized him. But such is not the purpose of God. Such is not man's inculcated duty. There is a bond of brotherhood that binds man to man throughout the whole extent of the human family. No man is entitled to say with surly or fiendish selfishness, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Least of all may a disciple of the Incarnate Saviour dare to indulge such a spirit. He knows or ought most impressively to know that it is the man-honouring and Divinely gracious plan of our Heavenly Father to bless man by man. Why was the father of the faithful, the friend of God, so immensely blessed! Was it for himself, or for himself and his seed alone, that Abraham became heir of the righteousness of faith and the recipient of the promises of Jehovah? Verily it was for a still nobler and loftier and more catholic and beneficent purpose. It was that "in him and in his Seed all the families of the earth should be blessed."

Let those then that name the name of Christ remember that the Heathens in their darkness will rise up and condemn them if they withhold the lamp of life from them, or do not call upon God, if so be He will think upon them that they perish not. This imperative obligation can never be neglected by the Church or by the Christian without inducing blighting, sterility, and the anger of the Most High upon the sinners. Even God's ancient people were more than the depositories and conservatory of True Religion. They were 'the salt of the earth and the light of the world.' Much more is it the business of the Christian to bear in mind that no man liveth unto himself, that "we are labourers together with God" for "His husbandry, His building," selected out of the materials of man in every state and stage of his history. "Awake then thou, &c.

Beloved friends, if sin be so baneful and so sure of retribution even in a child of God, in whom it can only assert a temporary and restrained sway—oh! what must it be where it

is altogether dominant in the soul and its ascendancy unbroken? How well may we say to the unsaved sinners, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? You are on the brink of a precipice, and, if you stop not and change your course, you will be hurled into the gulf of exceeding woe and wretchedness that lies below. The Gospel and its Author call to you, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," against the beseechings of the Saviour who died for sinners, and against His equally truthful warnings. Let Christians learn wisdom from the conduct of the shipmaster towards Jonah. "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God," said the earnest and sincere man to his fellow-traveller on the troubled and tempestuous sea. Imitate this faithfulness in your intercourse with the unbelieving. Who knows whether some Divine Truth may not be carried as an arrow of conviction to the conscience of the unconcerned transgressor? Who knows but that the Christian Minister or the Christian member may save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins? Let us then go to every ungodly voyager over the ocean of mortality, and with fear and trembling, fidelity and affection, faith and hope, say "What meanest thou, O sleeper, arise, call upon thy God," for whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Let us pray.

We again draw nigh into Thy Divine presence, O Thou who art the Living and the True God, the God of the sea and of the dry land, to supplicate Thy blessing and favour. Blessed be He who came in the name of the Lord to save sinners, and sinners such as we are. We gratefully remember that our Glorious Redeemer began His personal ministry upon earth, "upon the sea coast." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." We praise Thy most Holy Name, Thou God of benevolence and salvation, that Thy inspired prophet foretold this commencement of our Saviour's most precious work on earth, "saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them

which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." We delight to learn that before the advent of this Glorious Messiah, His quickening Spirit was not only vouchsafed to Thy people of Israel, but that as the Holy Agent of Him who was "a light to lighten the Gentiles" and "for salvation to the ends of the earth," He became the Spirit of life in the souls of many of those who were "strangers from the Covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." We adore Thee that among such the poor mariner was included. We are filled with adoring gratitude and admiration for Thy grace and its wondrous application to the seamen of the ship of Tarshish, with whom Thy Word brings us acquainted. How amazing is Thy wisdom ! How vast Thy goodness ! How truly dost Thou cause all things to fulfil Thy purposes. How admirably is Thy providence regulated in accordance with Thy love to the souls of those whom Thou art pleased to render the heirs of everlasting life !

Grant unto us, we entreat Thee, O most Merciful God, our Heavenly Father, for the sake of Thy Only Begotten and Well-Beloved Son, that simplicity and seriousness which are apparent in the men of the ship which had received Thy backsliding prophet. Give us, we entreat Thee, a spirit of godly sincerity and earnestness. Let us, like the Heathen mariners, improve under Thy teaching. Thou, who art Sovereign and Omnipotent, didst overrule even the perversity of Thy servant Jonah for their good. Whilst Thou didst chasten, save, and restore him, Thou wast pleased to alarm, humble, and have mercy upon them. Thou gavest them to know in the day of visitation the things that belonged to their peace. Oh ! let it be so also with us. Give us that repentance, faith and love which indicate that the soul is the willing subject of "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus."† Forbid that the Heathen seamen, of whom we have heard, should rise up in the judgement and condemn us. May we reverence like them Thy Name and Ordinances ; and be delivered from all profaneness and impiety. Bless all them that go down to the sea in ships. May the Blessed Saviour be

* Matthew 4, 15, 16.

† Romans 8, 2.

their confidence and Lord. Bless all gracious methods, which Thou art pleased to employ to call sinners to repentance. Bless all our friends and brethren. Reward our benefactors and well-wishers. Forgive our enemies. Bless our Sovereign the Queen, and all under her and over us. Bless our waiting upon Thee this day, and mercifully accept of us in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Let us conclude the worship of God by singing in Psalm 96, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

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THIRD SUNDAY.

Let us worship God by singing to His praise in the 7th Paraphrase at the 3rd Verse.

Let us pray.

Almighty and most Gracious Father, we desire now to approach Thee in supplication and devotion. Blessed be Thy Great and Holy Name, Thou hast warranted and invited us to draw unto Thee in and through the Son of Thy love. How marvellous are Thy nature, Thy government, Thy works, and Thy redeeming grace to the guilty children of men! We adore Thee, our souls are filled with awe and admiration, because of what even we know of Thy character, dominion, power, and goodness. "Justice and judgement are the habitation of Thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before Thy face."

Thou art the Omniscient Judge of right and wrong, the Supreme Arbiter of every man's doings and deserts. Thou art infallible and unerring. Thou also exercisest a sovereign sway over all Thy creatures and all their actions. There is no escape from Thee. "Thou compassest our path and our lying-down, and art acquainted with all our ways." Each of us may say with Thy servant of old, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." (Psalm 139).

How infinitely pure art Thou, O Thou Holy One of Israel! How dread Thy detestation of rebellion and of all sin!

"Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." (Psalm 90, 8). "Thou hatest all iniquity with a perfect hatred, and we would remember that Thou hast marked Thy especial abhorrence of it in Thy believing people. Thy dealings with Thy sinning servants may well lead us to exclaim, "And, if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Thou didst send out a great wind and a mighty tempest into the Sea after a disobedient prophet, so that he and the ship in which he was, with all the mariners, were all in danger of perishing; we would be impressed with the solemn conviction that, as Thou didst discover him to be the cause of Thy displeasure when the ship's company appealed to Thee by the lot, so wilt Thou discover every transgressor and the most secret sin of every ungodly transgressor. We know it, for Thou hast taught us, "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." (Job 34, 22). O Thou, "Jehovah, the God of Heaven, which hast made the sea and the dry land," be with us and bless us on the present occasion. May the record of Thy Word be the instrument of spiritual life and great benefit to us all for time and eternity through Jesus Christ, our Only Saviour. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 77, 13.

Read Hebrews, Chap. 12.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah I. 8.

The conduct and bearing of the ship's company to Jonah, after the lot had marked him out as the cause of their experienced and dreaded calamity, are worthy of observation. The prophet had complied with the wishes of his fellow-voyagers by joining them on deck and by uniting with them in an appeal to the Lord respecting which of them all it was, whose sin had brought this evil upon them. Hitherto he had

concealed from them, as far as possible, every thing respecting himself. He had confessed nothing : so that, until singled out by the decision of the Lord Jehovah, his country, character, and culpability were all unknown to the mariners of Tarshish. And, even after the lot had fallen upon Jonah, such was the respect, which his aspect and demeanour induced in the minds of these amiable and forbearing men, that they seem not to have been confident as to his being the guilty person. His singularity, gravity, and silence were all to them extraordinary. So far from proceeding at once to cast him into the Sea, they hesitated, as if afraid some mistake had occurred. These kindly and conciliating seamen put it to him, whether he could show them that they were wrong in believing him to be the guilty party. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us ; What is thine occupation ? and whence comest thou ? what is thy country ? and of what people art thou ?"

What commingled emotions are implied in these queries ! We behold in them the sincere respect evinced by master and men towards the prophet, their unfeigned benevolence and charity, together with urgent haste and intense anxiety. The terrific excitement under which they were labouring, and which they were seeking to subdue or soften, the more impelled them to ascertain who and whence the stranger was. The sameness or similarity of their questions would arise from their increased concern to ascertain both with regard to the stranger and themselves.

The consciousness of his guilt and the conviction of his duty now appear realized by Jonah. He makes a full disclosure of his country and people, of his calling, and of his sin, in which candour and contrition are both prominent. "And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew ; and I fear the Lord, the God of Heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this ? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them." Thus did the prophet preach, and thus did his audience hear. Surely his word, or rather the Word of Jehovah from his lips, was an all-powerful and life-giving word to

the terrified mariners, now "at their wit's end." Had, the preacher been privileged to address the same individuals in a retrospective view of the results of his solemn, truthful, simple declarations, how well might he have applied the language of St. Paul, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The Hebrew prophet unfolded to the earnest heathen seamen, to whom God had previously been the unknown God, the knowledge of the Lord. He told them of the peculiar privileges of his nation and of that God of the universe, who is the Only True and Living God, who alone ought to be feared and worshipped. He told them too of the grace and mercy of this God who is slow to anger and of great kindness; that He had enjoined him as His servant to go to Nineveh on an embassy of vital moment to its king and its people, but that the mandate he had disliked and sought to disobey by fleeing "from the presence of the Lord." And so it was, he admitted, that they and he were now in circumstances of the utmost peril and dismay. With what good effect such truth was proclaimed we already in some measure see. We are reminded by the remarkable features of this case of what transpired when the prophet Elijah, in obedience to the Divine command, stood "upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave." So also here. It was not the "mighty tempest in the Sea," not the terrific wind that had overtaken and nearly destroyed both the ship and the ship's crew, not the most extraordinary nature of the storm, not the casting forth of the waves that were in the ship into the Sea, not the alarm and dread that caused them to cry every man unto his

god, not the feelings that, having summoned all hands and the mysterious passenger on deck, induced them to cast lots that they might know for whose sake the evil was upon them, not any, or all of these together, so affected their minds as the quiet and awe-inspiring recital of the stranger. For "then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why has thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them."

Here, beloved friends, undoubtedly we beheld the beginning of that work of grace, which, we believe, was accomplished in the souls of these unenlightened voyagers of the deep. As frequently, perhaps always, happens, they experienced dread sensations of the power and purity of Jehovah, together with deep convictions of truth in reference to His character as the One Only Living God, and in regard to their own deserts as guilty, ignorant, and alienated sinners. This was accomplished by means of the Word of the Lord spoken "in the still small voice" of the prostrate Hebrew. It was not the roar of the hurricane, not the tumult of the watery abyss, not the proximity of instant death, not the near prospect of having the billows of the main as the covering of the seaman's grave. It was not these, it was none of these that produced the awful perturbation *stated*, not described, in the pithy style of the sacred writer. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid." It was *after* the light of the truth of God had been told them in simplicity and godly sincerity by the instrumentality of a disobedient, but now humbled prophet. So great is the honour that the Author of Nature and of Salvation puts upon the glad tidings, upon the still small voice even when spoken by sinful and erring man. "For, after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

Are we so far enlightened as to admire this wondrous method of the Most High? Oh! let us take heed that we be not pronouncing our own condemnation. If the still small voice has been heard savingly, we will be feelingly alive to its

communications. It cannot be so heard and the hearer remain unmoved. Its influence upon all, who profit by it, will generally at least be similar to that exerted upon the mariners of our text. It will cause them to fear "exceedingly." It will do so in a manner and to a degree that all the phenomena of Nature, and all the terrors of vengeance, would fail to inspire. It will convict, humble, alarm, and render earnestly enquiring, even when first in reality felt. It will lead the sinner to cry out, "What must I do to be saved? Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?" When more advanced, the child of God will be still farther awed, will have larger discoveries of the majesty, purity, and excellency of Jehovah, and deeper insight into the vileness and penal deserts of himself. How happy are they who are even at the first stage! in whom the Spirit of Christ has begun the good work! Well may the passage before us be employed to admonish the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, to seek the certain possession of spiritual life. Till the soul be quickened to a new and divine life by the Spirit of Christ, all doings, prayers, changes, and improvements are ineffectual for salvation. We believe it to be no uncommon thing for seamen, especially at the commencement of a voyage, to purpose reformation. It may be, that those, with whom Jonah sailed, did so, prior to being overtaken by the whirlwind and the storm. But, until they "feared the Lord" and had been born from Above, they could do nothing spiritually acceptable in the sight of a Holy God. So it must ever be with all the children of men, whether landmen, or of those who follow the sea. Let all then hear with reverence, affection and obedience the still small voice, as coming from Jesus Himself. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."*

In the knowledge conveyed to the minds of the Gentiles of our narrative, how beautiful a presage may we behold of the

* Matthew 11, 28, 30.

blissful period foretold by the enraptured Seer, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." How thrillingly does the same sublimest of writers predict the mild radiance and supernal glory of Him who is "a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel." "Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench. He shall bring forth judgement unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law." The inspired poet is transported with the beauty and grandeur of his theme; and calls upon a renovated world to proclaim aloud the praises of its Creator and Restorer, particularizing those who traverse the mighty deep, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands."† How forcibly should all Christian Gentiles, and especially all whose vocation, connections, or country may associate them with the sea, feel the appeal thus made to them to glorify their Redeemer, the Saviour, both of the old descendants of Abraham and of all others who believe in Him!

The sincere and kindly men of Tarshish, though shocked at the waywardness and rebellion of the prophet, and though they expressed to him their sense of his impious conduct, "Why hast thou done this," were yet unwilling to proceed to extremities with him, if he could show them how their safety could otherwise be secured. A Hebrew, yea, a prophet of Jehovah, the God of Israel, had endangered every thing that

* Isaiah 11, 9.

† Isaiah 42, 1-4 and 10-12.

was most dear to them, and by his sin brought them to the verge of an awful and unknown eternity. For this they had justly and well reproved him, not as multitudes of persons in such a situation would have done with indignation and wrath for the injury he had done them, but with correct views of his aggravated sin and with the most benevolent feelings towards himself. They saw that sin was peculiarly sinful in him, and that his sin was an offence both against God and man, yet did they wish to be merciful and compassionate to the uttermost. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the Sea may be calm unto us? for the Sea wrought, and was tempestuous." The interrogation was met in a manner altogether becoming by the prophet. He directs them what to do to him, promises them immediate relief after sacrificing him, and again declares that he was the transgressor whose sin had found him out, and whose spirit was now self-abased and penitent, "And he said unto them, Take me up and cast me forth into the Sea; so shall the Sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."

"Self-preservation is the first law of nature," it is said. But in the case of Jonah, as in that of Abraham offering up his son Isaac, we see what may be called the first law of renewed human nature, of spiritual life in the soul of man. It is the setting God above our chiefest joy or desire. It is such devotion and obedience to Him as will induce us cheerfully to relinquish every thing, even what is naturally most dear to us, in deference to His will and for the promotion of His honour. For the glory of Jehovah, the God of Heaven, which made the sea and the dry land, the prophet was now most willing to die. He was also anxious to preserve the lives of those interesting persons who had been brought into the utmost peril by his violation of the duty which he owed to God. And he was perfectly aware that this could only be effected by the sacrifice of his own life. This he was ready, nay desirous to give up. He did not fear death for himself. He knew in whom he trusted, and relied upon the Covenant and love of the Lord. And he knew that the immortal beings, whom he had greatly injured, but whom he

might now hope eternally to benefit, were not as prepared as he was. The first principles of Saving Truth he had been privileged to communicate to them, and it may be that he perceived the operation of the Divine life in its beginning in their souls. That beginning he might profoundly wish to be matured and perfected in them. At all events his duty was clear, and with a straight-forwardness altogether undeviating he urged upon his brethren the method of deliverance.

In this we may observe that Jonah was a type of Christ who gave His life a ransom for many, and with regard to whom a greater than Caiaphas determined that it was "expedient for us, that one man should die for the people."* Shall we not also say that something of the Spirit of Christ in love to men rested upon him and enabled him resolutely and religiously to atone to man, in so far as he could, for the injury he had brought upon him, and by the devout and resigned giving up of his own life to do what he could for the temporal and eternal good of the individuals with whom he had been brought into fellowship. How successful he was, we are aware. And it may strike even the passing observer that God marvellously brings good out of evil, and makes His genuine children even though sinning and culpable, in the very chastisement with which He visits their sins, to be unspeakable blessings to society. Oh, how in the issue would the sailors, that now listened to the rebellious prophet, have cause to praise the name of Israel's God that they had been brought into contact with Jonah! And how may we all adore and magnify the holy name of Him, all whose purposes shall take effect and whose counsel shall stand. Does Jonah ask to resist the compassion and love of God to Nineveh? Does he determine that he will not be the instrument of such goodness, and strive to flee from the presence of the Lord? Verily, he shall not only accomplish, and that thankfully, the intention of the God of mercy to that great city, he shall do more—he shall carry and convey to heathen seamen, who again may carry and convey, the glad tidings of Salvation to many a distant shore and many a perishing sinner. Oh! then let us admire

* John 11, 50.

and worship Him "who doeth great things without number." "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."* And, while we wonder and are awed by such instances of heroism and self-denial as are furnished by the tender and loving father of the faithful, and by the contrite Hebrew before us, let us never forget that it was by the grace of God they were what they were. The reason why that grace was bestowed upon them, and the reason why it became so effectual in them, must be found in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, in their union to Him who is the Head and Life of the mystical body, and in the sanctifying power of His Holy Spirit.

Are we then called upon to mark and to imitate the excellency of such examples? Oh! let us ever bear in mind that a greater than Abraham, and a greater than Jonah, is here. Let us rejoice in the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction, "And there shall come forth a Bud out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."† And, oh! let us seek personally to benefit by those things which were written aforetime for our learning. Let us seek to be the accepted children of the Most High. Then shall we also be disciples. Happy is the man whom the Lord chastens. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And, while we kiss the rod of chastisement, when visited with it, oh! let us seek to live without rebuke in the midst of a corrupt and perverse generation, shining as spiritual lights in the world.

Let us sing Paraphrase 23, 12.

Let us pray.

How excellent, O Lord, is Thy name in all the earth. Great art Thou and greatly to be feared; much to be loved

* Isaiah 12, 6.

† Isaiah 11, 1.

also and held in esteem of all that approach Thee. The sea is Thine, for Thou madest it, and Thine hands have formed the dry land. Thou controllest and governest all the elements of Nature. The winds are Thy messengers, and Thou employest both the storm and the calm to fulfil Thy wise and holy pleasure.

Oh Thou, God of mercy and all goodness, be pleased to bless our meditations upon the interesting portion of Thy Word which has now been engaging our attention. We praise Thee for overruling the waywardness of Thy servant, the prophet, for the highest good of the poor mariners with whom he was sailing. We praise Thee for the still small voice which they heard. We praise Thee that the Word was with power to their souls, so that the word preached did profit, being mixed with faith in them that heard it. We praise Thee on behalf of all who through grace have been saved by the instrumentality of the "glad-tidings" of the love of Christ. Make us, we entreat Thee, to be filled with that salutary and saving fear of Thee which is the beginning of wisdom. May we receive the truth of Thy Word in the love of it and live henceforth under its abiding influence.

Prosper, we entreat Thee, O Thou God of Salvation, all efforts for the eternal good of perishing sinners. Bless especially, we pray, those which are more particularly designed for seamen.

Bless our country, our Queen, Her Majesty's Royal Consort, and the various members of the Royal Family. Set the great and the good of the land in the high places. Bless all in authority and all under authority. Bless us, O Heavenly Father, in our several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, and equals. Guide us by thy counsel over the sea of life, and finally admit us to the haven of everlasting repose, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 25, 6.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

FOURTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 7.

Let us pray.

We come unto Thee, O Jehovah, the True and Living God, to adore and supplicate Thee at the footstool of Thy Throne of Mercy. It is a good thing, we are assured, for us sinners to take avail of Thy free favour. Blessed be Thy Holy Name for the Revelation of Thy good will to the guilty children of men. Blessed be He who came in the name of the Lord to save perishing men, and who came "not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." We praise Thee this day, Heavenly Father, that life and immortality have been clearly brought to light by the Gospel of Thy Dear Son. We praise Thee that even we, who are "of them that are afar off upon the sea," have seen the days of the Son of Man, and have heard what many kings and prophets and righteous men of old waited and longed to witness. We magnify Thy Gracious and Holy Name for the clear discoveries which Thou hast vouchsafed to those that were near, and to those that were far off, of the Way of Salvation through a once crucified but now risen and glorified Redeemer. May we individually know Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We rejoice with gratitude and admiration to contemplate Thy love and goodness to the mariners of Tarshish. Thou didst great things and marvellous for them. May we, like them, receive Thy Word with reverence, attention, and docility. And may it prove to us, as it did to them, a salutary and life-giving word. Enable us to study it with the earnestness manifested by them. Oh! forbid that in the great day of reckoning they should rise in the judgement and condemn us. For they repented and believed at the preaching of Jonah, and we may

truly say, "Behold a greater than Jonah is here." May we be enabled by the power of Thy Holy Spirit to exercise repentance toward God and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Grant us the Spirit of grace and of supplication. In the day of trouble, in the hour of danger, may we ever betake ourselves to Thee in the confidence of prayer, and relying upon the intercession of our Great High Priest and Advocate.

We would unite in earnestly imploring that Thy Word may this day have free course and be glorified. May it be a quickening, sanctifying, and comforting word to those who hear it. Bless it to all. Bless it to those who go down to the sea in ships. We pray for young men. May many a youthful seaman be found enquiring, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? May the answer of Inspired Truth be carried home with saving power to his heart, "By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." May the retrospect and petition of every such and of each of us be, "With my whole heart have I sought Thee: O let me not wander from Thy commandments."*

And now, Holy Father, our hope is in Thee. Deny us not Thy grace. Magnify Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy to us ward; and to Thy great name in Christ shall be all the glory, world without end. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah i. 13.

The singularity and awe-inspiring demeanour of Jonah had caused the seamen of the ship bound to Tarshish to doubt,

* Psalm 119, 91, 10.

whether, even after he had been singled out by the lot of the Lord, he was the man. They seem to have experienced some misgivings lest a mistake had occurred. And with a candour and kindness rarely to be met with they appealed to himself as to any possible method of escape that would consist with the preservation of their own lives. The prophet, however, was firm and faithful, humble and honest, self-denying and stern. "And he said unto them, take me up, and cast me forth into the Sea; so shall the Sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." Even this renewed assurance of the cause of their imminent peril could not induce these gentle and forbearing mariners at once to sacrifice their extraordinary passenger. "Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the Sea wrought and was tempestuous against them." They sought to return to the land. They put about with a view to make Joppa or the vicinity. But the tempestuous wind which had overtaken them, blowing from that direction, nullified all the exertions of the sailors. Their danger increased when they sought to head their bark against the deadful hurricane that threatened every moment their destruction, "the Sea wrought and was tempestuous against them."

The prophet had used every exertion "to flee from the presence of the Lord." Concurring circumstances and favourable breezes, the ship ready to sail for Tarshish and ready to receive him as a passenger, all seemed in harmony with his wishes, all appeared ready to facilitate and accomplish his purposes. Some would have been so ignorant or so presumptuous as to have inferred that Divine Providence was on the side of Jonah.

But "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord."* No sooner have we seen the disobedient prophet, embarked on his way from the land of vision and inspiration, gone down into the sides of the ship, where, nature weary and worn out, he lay and was fast asleep—no sooner are we beginning to contemplate this sight, even before we

* Psalm 21, 30.

are fully aware of it, we are met with the intelligence, "But the Lord sent out a great wind into the Sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." And still this mighty gale was threatening instant destruction to all on board. There was no doubt now as to the individual, "for whose cause this evil was upon them." The disposing of the lot by Jehovah, and the iterated truth by the guilty but repentant Jonah, made the evidence doubly certain. His life apparently was indispensable in order to the safety of his fellows. So spoke the abased and contrite messenger. "Take me up, and cast me into the Sea; so shall the Sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." Even yet the tender, life-respecting, and God-fearing voyagers were not prepared to sacrifice the man, through whom they were so marvellously endangered. "Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land, but they could not: for the Sea wrought and was tempestuous against them." The will of God was now manifest, and their feeling at length was, 'the will of the Lord be done.' With solemn prayer and invocation they proceeded to the discharge of their sad, yet imperative duty, deprecating the crime of innocent blood. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, we beseech Thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for Thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased Thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the Sea: and the Sea ceased from her raging."

How awe-inspiring are the transaction and the result. How fraught with salutary suggestions! It proclaims what the devout Psalmist sings in a song of inspired praise to the Lord. "Justice and judgement are the habitation of Thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before Thy face."* How admirably may we here behold the union and co-operation! The heathen seamen are rendered partakers of the mercy of the God of Israel, receive His truth in the love of it, and by mercy and truth are made spiritual Israelites. They learn

* Psalm 18, 14.

the forgiveness of sins through the merits of the promised Sacrifice, and are renewed in the spirit of their minds by the grace of the Spirit of Christ.

But how dark and frowning an aspect does the narrative seem to present with respect to Jonah! Would then nothing short of his being cast forth into the Sea pacify the raging of the angry billows or satisfy the demands of that God "who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds His chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind?"* There is a great principle here manifested. It is that a holy God will ever chastise in a marked manner His children for their sins. It is not only true that the Heavenly Parent "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;" it is also true that *His* honour and *their* best welfare require that sin should be pointed out as especially hateful and vile in them. How singular, were it not so, to observe the dealings of the Lord with His illustrious servant Moses, the "King in Jeshurun." Because *once* this meekest of men, this man of God, of whom the Spirit of the Lord testifies, that he "was very meek above all the men that were upon the face of the earth,"†—because upon one solitary occasion he violated the law of meekness, saying with Aaron his brother, most perverse and trying to the house of Israel, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"‡ We hear as it were the God of Jeshurun saying to him, "Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho, and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession; and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel."§ But after all the attentive student of the Word

* Psalm 104, 3.

† Numbers 12, 3.

‡ Numbers 20, 10.

§ Deuteronomy 32, 49.

of God will clearly and joyfully discover that there is the most perfect and paternal love in the mind of God towards His erring ones, even when in faithfulness and justice they are visited with the rod of correction. The reader feels as if the penalty in the case of Israel's sin had been transmuted into an honour. How sublime the record! "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the Utmost Sea, And the south, and the valley of Jericho, the City of Palm-trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither."* Was there not honour thus put upon one, whom we might almost designate the greatest of men and the greatest of saints? What mere man was ever so honoured, to whom Jehovah-Immanuel personally pointed out the type of the Paradise above in the earthly Canaan? Only think of the scene for a moment. See the man of unearthly dignity, 'beholding the glory of all lands' as shown to him by the Lord Himself. Then imagine that eye, undimmed by the wear of a hundred and twenty years, suddenly losing its lustre, closing in death, and opening upon the vista of immortality in the enjoyments of the Celestial Canaan. Surely there is something here almost amounting to a translation. "So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."† That there was unearthly grandeur incident to his burial, we are well assured from the contest about his body between Michael the archangel and the Prince of evil spirits † Such was the reverence and dignity attendant upon a noble of the Kingdom of Christ, even

* Deuteronomy 34, 1.

† Jude 9.



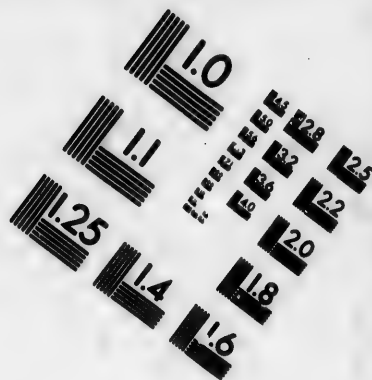
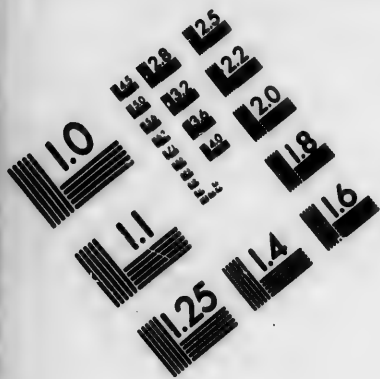
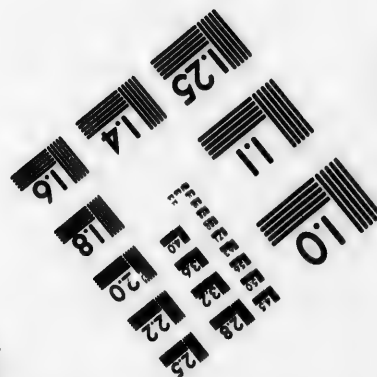
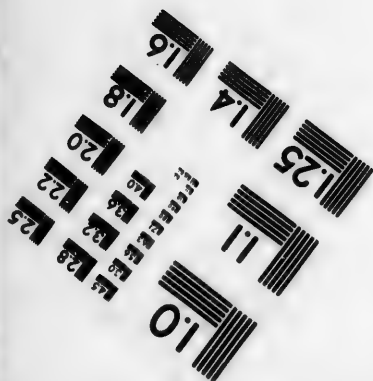
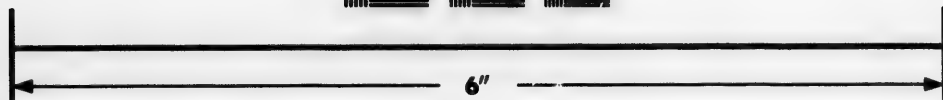
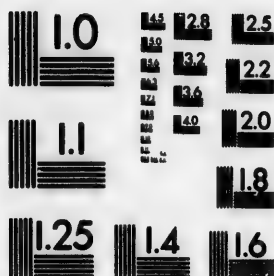


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when enduring the penalty attached to a particular sin. Nor are the miraculous preservation of the prophet of our text, and the uses of that preservation, of a totally different character. On the contrary we shall find that Jonah's imprisonment and deliverance proved a blessing in its gracious result. The God of Salvation was glorified also in a conspicuous and most impressive manner.

The immediate effect of the mariners' compliance with the counsel of their passenger is intimated. "So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the Sea : and the Sea ceased from her raging." The effect upon themselves is also particularly stated. "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." This may well engage special attention.

First, we are told, "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly." How remarkable ! that they should have done so after 'the Sea ceased from her raging' ! This is neither the working nor the order of unrenewed human nature. The whole is evidently of Divine grace operating in their souls. We have already seen the influence of the still small voice of Religious Truth as spoken by the preacher in circumstances the most extraordinary. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid." Doubtless their heart and mind then were influenced by that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom." Even then there was that fear which does not imply distracting terror, but which implies esteem, reverence, awe, and affection. How beautifully marked is the progress in grace in these "new-born babes" of the kingdom of God ! That kingdom as to its principles was within them. And the path of the justified believer, of the partaker of Divine life, is ever onward, like that of the shining light. These men of simplicity and godly sincerity "were exceedingly afraid," when first they received the sincere milk of the Word. The sin of seeking to flee from the Holy Lord God, and the manifest displeasure of that God of Israel against the prophet in the raging of the Sea, had impressed them with the profoundest sensations of veneration and dismay. But, though filled with dread, they never despaired. They had hope in God. This "anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast," accompanies

the Heaven-bound mariner from his first setting out on his spiritual voyage until he drops it safely in the haven of everlasting life.

The seamen of Tarshish had witnessed and felt the power of Jehovah's displeasure. This together with some general knowledge of His nature and requirements excited in them the most august perception of His greatness, power, and excellency. Now they beheld a display of His sovereignty and goodness. The unparalleled storm had become a calm. It may be that they were aware of Jonah's safety. At all events the kindness and love of God, their Saviour, to them, they realized most deeply. Their spiritualized faculties were sharpened. They were now more keenly alive both to the holiness and compassion of the Only Living and True God. And all His goodness increasingly affected them. It led them to renewed repentance. The language of the inspired prophet in the whole of the 12th Chapter of Isaiah might have been aptly appropriated by them individually. "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee : though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid."

What a contrast does the fear of the heathen sailors present to that fear of the natural man which has torment ! The one leads to the Lord, the other, as is seen in the case of Adam and Eve, drives from Him. What an instance of tormenting fear is furnished by Felix. Behold the stately monarch, seated in quiet within his own palace with his wife Drusilla. The captive Apostle is summoned into their presence, and is heard "concerning the faith in Christ," when, lo ! "as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come, Felix trembled." Why is this ? To the eye of the unpenetrating observer there appears every reason for gratulation and happiness. Yet, with nothing without and nothing within the bounds of his domain to cause apprehension, the proud prince is suddenly seized with trembling and horror. What can be the cause ? Surely

there is nothing in the heroic Apostle, his prisoner, to incite to such alarm. Is it the magic of the undaunted and fearless speaker's voice that has produced such an effect? Ah! no. It is the force of Divine Truth. It is the convictions of conscience confirming the dread denunciations of the Revelation of God. It is the verisimilitude of the indispensable necessity of repentance and faith in the crucified Nazarene. Perhaps it is the Spirit of God striving yet once again to lead this guilty man to flee from the wrath to come. By the difficulty of Salvation even to the righteous, by the solemn exhortations to be sober, to reflect, to deny self, to crucify the flesh, to follow Jesus, by the loud terrors of the coming judgement and the vengeance or favour of the awful Judge, this perishing sinner is faithfully warned and admonished to take refuge in an accepted time and in the way of salvation in the Only Saviour who is now "a hiding-place from the storm and a covert from the tempest." Alas! with how little success. He will not accept of Christ *at present*. He is not prepared to forsake all sin and to yield himself to Jesus. "Go thy way," he replies to the preacher, "for this time; when I have a convenient season I will send for thee." Dreadful postponement! Did that convenient season ever arrive? Never, in all probability. His deferred good intention helped to pave the way to hell for him. Oh! what multitudes act in a manner precisely similar! Oh! that they were not so like the ostrich which, when pursued by the fowler, closes its eyes upon its danger! "Oh! that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." To such we would say, "Men and brethren, why will ye die." This is the exhortation of the God of Salvation Himself with you. What would we think of the mariner who, though warned with infallible certainty of the approach of the destructive hurricane, would make no preparation to meet the gale, would not reef, take in a sail, or seek to have the ship in a state of readiness? If he despised the port of security which he could make and where he could in safety ride out the storm, if he disregarded alike the danger of

foundering at sea or of being shipwrecked upon a coast amidst whose eddies and reefs no life-boat could reach—would we not accuse such of folly the most egregious and of madness the most wicked? Yet all this would be but a feeble type of the suicidal career of many a mariner now on the sea of life and sailing to eternity.

There are not a few who seek to comfort themselves with the thought that there are many equally in danger with themselves. But, as in case of shipwreck the accumulation of persons by increasing the confusion and perplexity renders the safety of each the less likely, so the innumerability of the multitude, that shall populate the abodes of the finally condemned, will enhance the wretchedness and the recriminations of the individuals composing it. The mirth of the fool, the joviality of the profligate, the vice of the unclean, the tongue of the profane, the bravado of the scoffer,—will all go to swell the amount of misery realized by all and by each one.

Those who fear the Lord, as did the mariners of our text, shall be delivered from the tormenting fear of an angry God. They will find that filial fear harmonizes with love and highest esteem of the Heavenly Parent. The fear of the Lord was first experienced by his companions under the influence of the solemn truths stated by the prophet. It was increased after they were delivered from danger, when the danger of immediate death had passed away. This holy fear consisted of awe and reverence, of devout gratitude and ardent affection towards the God of Israel.

In accordance with these feelings the men "offered a sacrifice unto the Lord." Thus did they do homage to the Only True and Living God. In this sacrifice they confessed that He might justly have visited them with death and all the dreadful consequences of sin. They also avowed their belief in the doctrine of substitution. In some degree, however small, we may suppose that those converts to the worship of the God of Israel were enlightened in the knowledge of the intended and predicted Sacrifice, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, who should die the just for the unjust," to restore man to the image and communion of his Maker. In this substitution we behold embodied the princi-

ple that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." And we behold the gracious modification of the principle, "The soul that sinneth shall die," in the fact that Divine justice can be satisfied by the death of another than the actual offender—can accept an adequate substitute. Hence the institution of animal sacrifice where the offender was authorized to slay an innocent animal in order that his own life might be spared, and as a type of the offering up of Him once for all, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and whose death gives life to every believer, by the appointment of the God of holiness, who in His infinite and eternal love has been [pleased thus to afford a way of escape for the repentant sinner and a method of restoration to the image and felicity of Himself for all who take hold of His offered Son.

How emphatically might the poor mariners of our passage have responded to the inspired invitation, "Assemble yourselves and come : draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations : they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together : who hath declared this from ancient time ? who hath told it from that time ? have not I the Lord ? and there is no God else besides Me ; a just God, and a Saviour : there is none besides Me."* O how joyfully would those humble traversers of the deep have listened to the thrilling and most expansive goodness and loving-kindness expressed in what follows, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else."†

We are told that the men not only "offered a sacrifice unto the Lord," they also "made vows." These must have been with respect to the future. Thus do we perceive the cordial, deep-seated, thorough nature of the change they had experienced. Their goodness was not of that order which passes away like the morning cloud, their gratitude not of that description which vanishes like the column of smoke. On the contrary with solemnity, humility and faith they de-

* Isaiah 45, 20, 21.

† Isaiah 45, 22.

dedicated themselves to Jehovah as the God of their life and salvation to be His only and ever more. To this they were constrained by the principle of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by His Spirit given unto them.

How instructive and salutary is the record of the mariners of the "ship going to Tarshish!" How profitable for all men, and especially for those who "go down to the sea in ships," if they will but ponder and seek benefit by it. For this purpose let all pray that they may realize what the saved seamen, saved from death and saved from sin with all its punishment, exhibit. Let them in nearness to God fear the Lord exceedingly, offer the sacrifice of soul, body, and spirit by faith in Christ to Him, and vow vows of thankfulness and increasing consecration of the whole man. Those, who will follow this counsel, will find that in commemorating the death and deathless love of the crucified Saviour in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they will especially grow in grace, attain to joy in believing, and be honoured as blessings to their fellow-voyagers to eternity.

Let us pray.

Follow, Blessed Lord, with Thy most effectual blessing our meditations upon some of the solemn truths of Thy Holy Word. Let none of us be a stranger to that fear of the Lord which is "the beginning" of Heavenly wisdom. Enable us all by faith to take hold of a crucified Saviour as the Sacrifice for all sin. May we solemnly dedicate ourselves to Thee in the Covenant of Thy love by a personal vowing never to be broken or forgotten.

Bless all our brethren of mankind, whether they be nigh at hand or far off upon the sea. Oh! cause mariners to follow the pious example of those who sailed with Thy servant Jonah. Bless the proclamation of Thy Truth with similar efficacy as when spoken by him to the men of Tarshish. May many run to and fro to publish the Gospel. Bless all in authority and all under authority. Bless us in our several stations and relations, as superiors, inferiors, and equals.

Bless us with all temporal, and spiritual, and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus. And unto Thee the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be glory and praise, world without end. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 56, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all.
Amen.

FIFTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 9 at the 9th Verse.

Let us pray.

We desire now, Almighty and most Merciful Father, to approach Thee with the profoundest reverence and admiration. We adore Thee as the Great Uncreated Spirit, the Infinite Mind, eternal in Thy existence and boundless in all perfection.

"Who can by searching find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as Heaven; what can we do? deeper than Hell; what can we know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea." Praised for ever be Thy Holy Name, O Lord, for the discoveries which Thou hast afforded to man of Thyself, especially in the volume of Revelation. We are there taught to sing unto Thee and say, Honour and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.*

"Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them."† We are called upon this day, O Thou Preserver of men, to remember and mark that Thou, after "the sea had ceased from her raging," and the

* Psalm 96.

† Psalm 89, 9.

'mighty tempest' had been followed by an awful calm, "didst cause a great fish to swallow up Jonah." In the belly of that fish didst Thou cause him to live three days and three nights, a monument of Thy power and goodness, and a striking type of Thy Son, who, after being crucified, was buried in the rich man's tomb and remained there till the third day. May we be savingly impressed with the solemn evidences which we thus have of Thy love, grace, truth, and mercy. May we be enabled to profit by the record which Thou hast given us in Thy Word of wisdom and in Thy ways. Grant unto us the same spirit of prayer and devotion which characterized Thy servant when in trouble. It may be that our conscience convicts us of profaneness and many other sins. Pardon, blot out, cleanse us from all our iniquities. And grant us that godly sorrow, that true repentance and contrition for the evils which Thou hast beheld in us, which we may discover in the prophet and which characterizes every true, penitent believer in Jesus. Purify us, Blessed Lord, from all our pollution in the precious fountain of our Redeemer's blood, and by the renovating influences of the Holy Spirit make us pure and holy, so that we may be numbered with Thy peculiar people who are zealous of good works.

Blessed be Thy Name, Heavenly Parent, Thou encourager of those, that go down to the sea in ships, to seek Thy face and favour. Grant us that love of Thy Ordinances, Sanctuary, and Day, which distinguishes Thy children of every kindred and people. The devout Israelite, when compassed about with the floods, when Thy billows and waves passed over him, could yet say, "I will look again toward Thy holy temple." Oh, our rejoicing is, that now, wherever on the dry land or at sea two or three are met together that they may honour and follow Jesus, Thy Son, there will He be graciously present by His Spirit to bless and to do them good. May it be so in our experience. May each of us become a true and an advancing Christian. Our hope is in God, and we entreat Thee mercifully to answer our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us read Psalms 42 and 43.

Let us sing Psalm 42, 7.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah I. 16, Jonah II.

Much unprofitable discussion has taken place respecting the "great fish" here mentioned. Nor have infidelity and profaneness failed to take occasion from it to vent their hatred of God and goodness. To the sincere believer in the Word of Revelation but little needs be said to satisfy him that the imprisonment of the prophet; whether in the belly of a whale or of some other great fish, should not occasion any serious difficulty. Let the enlightened and candid mind only admit the miraculous nature of the case, and every thing is easily settled, so far as it needs be. The objection of the smallness of the whale's throat and stomach, and its consequent incapacity to contain a living man, may be met by the fact that "there is a bag or intestine serving as an air-vessel to this vast animal, in which the prophet might have been contained." (Jelb). It has been observed that, if Jonah were detained in the mouth of the whale, he was less unpleasantly circumstanced than if in the stomach of any fish. "For the mouth of a common whale, when open, presents a cavity as large as a room, and capable of containing a mer-

chant-ship's jolly-boat, full of men, being six or eight feet wide, ten or twelve feet high (in front), and fifteen or sixteen feet long." (Scoresby, 1. 44b.)*

But it appears preferable to suppose that the great fish of our passage was *not* a whale. Entire human bodies have been found in the shark. And, as the animal stomach has no power over substances endued with vitality, Jonah, not being previously injured by the fish, might naturally remain alive after being swallowed by it. By a miraculous agency he was not only at first preserved from suffocation and all other injury, but he was also enabled to live with perfect consciousness and in the exercise of all his mental faculties for the time here specified, "three days and three nights," a period which according to the Jewish mode of estimation does not necessarily signify more than one entire solar day and a part of two days additional, the one preceding, the other subsequent.

Nor does the term employed by our Lord (Matt. 12, 40), when alluding to Jonah, though applied to designate the whale, restrict us to it alone. It signifies equally well a large fish, a sea-monster. It is true that, if the current phraseology of the day had entitled it a whale, our Divine Master, who (with all the inspired writers of Scripture) never strains about the appropriation of a word, or quarrels with its popular and received acceptance, but rather conforms to common usage, might justly employ the usual and best known term in conveying the solemn intimation associated with the typical burial and restoration of the prophet. Yet the reasons already referred to and the consideration, that whales have not been seen in the Mediterranean Sea, where the occurrence transpired, seem to justify the opinion that the great fish, which formed the temporary grave of the Hebrew Seer, was not a whale.

With these observations, we ought also to remark the language of our text, "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." The fish may have been a miraculous creation, a monster neither a whale nor a shark, but one prepared by the Omnipotent for the special purpose of temporarily retaining the prophet in a state of life and capable of

* Illustrated Comm. of the Bible.

the healthful use of his mental and spiritual faculties. Though a miracle throughout of a very extraordinary nature, it is not by any means the most marvellous recorded in the Holy Scriptures, so that, if we believe in the verity of the Book of God, we shall find no occasion of stumbling here, but on the contrary much that by the blessing of the illuminating and sanctifying influences of the Divine Spirit is admirably fitted to advance our progress in heavenly wisdom and goodness.

The genuineness of Jonah's religious character is strikingly set before us in the beginning of Chap. 2nd. When the prophet found himself still in the body, alive in his supernatural prison or refuge, "Then," says the inspired narrative, "Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly." We here behold the spiritual Israelite. As if by instinctive affection and the power of habit, Jonah in affliction betakes himself to the God of his salvation, whom he recognizes and addresses as his Covenant God, as the Lord his God. Mark the necessity and benefit of the discipline and chastening of the Heavenly Parent upon His erring and backsliding children. He is represented as saying, "I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their offences, and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek Me early.* It is in the day of sorrow and humiliation that contrite sinners will hear the voice of their Father's love and authority, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." It is then that they will reply, "Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord, our God."†

We have an eminent example of this in the case before us. Affliction is the time for special prayer to a believer. If he has been undutiful and negligent of seeking God and His communion, he will be brought into the deep waters of affliction, if that be requisite to bring him to himself and to bring him back to God. If the convicting, invigorating, purifying, ennobling, elevating, sanctifying presence and influences of the Spirit of grace are not sufficient or are resisted, God has

* Hosea 5, 15.

† Jeremiah 3, 22.

other arrows in His quiver which He will render effective. His Providential dispensations will be of such a class and bearing as to awaken reflection and lead to repentance. The backslider must be made to feel his guilt, and his need of the mercy of God. His spiritual perceptions and sensibilities must be rendered acute and healthful. This may be done through personal and relative distress and trials. Whether perversity, waywardness, the will of the flesh, pride, whatever sin may be ascendant and prominent, its strength must be broken and its ejection ensured. Every lust, idol, and carnal principle must be cast out and crucified. The soul must again draw nigh to God in lowly and earnest supplication. To this it must come, sooner or later. Alas ! how much of correction is often requisite, even in the believer, to induce this right spirit. But to this at length the child of God will accede. So it happened in the instance of our history. It does not appear that the prophet had previously, from the time of his flight from the Holy Land and his being received on board the "ship going to Tarshish," called upon the name of the Lord his God. He was summoned to it in the affecting language of the shipmaster, "What meanest thou, O sleeper ? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not." But we are not told that he complied with the solemn and urgent admonition. However, he is now brought to it. After having been cast overboard, as the only means of the preservation of the lives of the mariners, and having been swallowed by the fish prepared of the Lord for the purpose, "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God."

What a cause for astonishment and adoring gratitude is there in the consideration that God encourages the return and will accept the sacrifice of those who have gone far astray from Him and are only brought to reflection by His scourging rod ! Thus, when speaking of the backsliding Jewish nation, the prediction of Hosea proceeds, "And I will visit upon her the ways of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her ear-rings and jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord." We might have supposed that the necessary consequence must be, the

denunciation of wrath and punishment against such a people. But the Lord's ways are not like man's, nor are His thoughts like ours. Instead of reprobation, as might have been expected, the Divine Husband and Head of His erring Church says, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her."* Well might the repentant and contrite King of Israel with the affection and confidence of a believer decide, "let us now fall into the hand of the Lord; for His mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man."† And every believer may hear by faith the soul-staying assurance, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." (Isaiah 54, 10.)

So soon as the heart is softened, the spirit contrite, and the whole soul humbled, prayer will be induced. "No place is amiss for prayer. Wherever God casts us, we may find a way open Heavenward. He, that has Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, wherever he goes, carries his altar with him that sanctifies the gift! and he is himself a living temple." (Tract Society Commentary.) When Jonah found himself in his most marvellous situation, he doubtless reflected much on the past, and thought much of the present and the future. Nor did he delay longer to draw nigh to Him who alone could hear and help him. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks," said the afflicted Psalmist, when his own conscience concurred with the external world in writing bitter things against him, falling back upon first principles and holding fast to the foundation of his hope, "so panteth my soul after Thee, O God."‡ The prophet Habakkuk, when pleading for his people, says, "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die."‡ And in Jonah also we behold the appropriating faith and loving confidence of one who had the testimony of God's Spirit

* Hosea 2, 13, 14.

† Psalm 42, 1.

‡ Habakkuk 1, 12.

witnessing with his own spirit that he was after all a child of God. We see him coming to Jehovah as his Covenant God. "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou heardest my voice."

We are not to conclude that the form of words employed in the Chapter before us comprises more than a general outline of the prophet's devotional exercises and communion with God in his prison. We are presented rather with a narrative of his prayerful bearing throughout. The whole seems to indicate that Jonah during the entire period of his confinement prayed without ceasing, with great earnestness, importunity, and perseverance. Strong faith and good hope characterize the suppliant.

The language of versé 2, is expressive of the utmost vehemence in his address to the Most High. The prophet tells us that in his solemn urgency he "cried," or, as the word literally signifies, *vociferated* "unto the Lord." Nor does he fail to inform us that the instrument in accomplishing this state of mind was *affliction*, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord." To whom could he go in such an awful hour, when almost overwhelmed, save to the Living God? He knew that the gods of the nations were vanity and a lie, and that they who trusted in them would be put to confusion. But in the Lord is everlasting strength. And *this* God was *his* God. To Him therefore, as "the Lord his God, Jonah prayed." And fervent gratitude filled his breast in consequence to the Answerer of his supplication. He is in haste at the outset to state the Divine goodness. "I cried (or called) by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and *He heard me*, or, as the word might equally well be rendered, *He answered me*. The intense earnestness of the suppliant is strikingly intimated by the iteration of the writer;—"I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I (*vociferated*), and Thou heardest my voice."

Both his sin and its chastisement were now vividly present to Jonah's mind. He was filled with profound sorrow on

account of his transgression, which had been so singled out and exposed and visited by the God against whom the prophet had sinned. And this sorrow was doubtless enhanced by the strange, the unparalleled position in which he found himself. Though there is the most perfect dissimilarity between the sorrow of the world for sin which worketh death, and that sorrow to repentance which makes the subject of it "sorry after a godly manner," yet, were we to fancy the latter to be absolutely disinterested, and without any regard to the personal weal of the individual in whom it is found, we would be greatly astray. Such a theory finds no countenance either in Holy Scripture, reason, or fact. On the contrary the glory and will of the reconciled Heavenly Parent, and the happiness or suffering of the regenerated and adopted child of God, are all in such perfect concordance that every departure from obedience and from doing honour to the Lord is sure to entail both defilement and bitter inward grief upon the blood-washed disciple of Christ until by renewed spiritual cleansing in the blood of Atonement the conscience is pacified and the soul again purified. On the other hand the Divine ordination has appointed great peace to them that love the law of the Lord, and that in the keeping of His commandments there shall be a felt reward.

The prophet refers to his awful sensations when he says, "Out of the belly of hell cried I." In this we perceive that he was aware that what was to him for a time as a cavern, as *hades*, the concealed or unseen place of the departed spirits, was not really and permanently so, else he had not cried in accents of strenuous entreaty and devout supplication to the Hearer of prayer, who, he knew, can be acceptably so invoked only in this world. In short, Jonah was perfectly sensible that he was not a disembodied spirit, that he was still in the body. Though the term *hades*—the invisible abode of the dead, is commonly applied to the place of wretchedness, it simply signifies—the receptacle of the deceased. In this sense Jacob employed the word when he said, "For I will go down into the grave (*hades*) unto my son mourning."* By *the grave* here, the patriarch obviously

* Genesis 37, 35.

intended, the state of the dead; not literally the grave, for he thought that Joseph had been devoured by a beast.

From his miraculous *hades* did Jonah cry unto the Lord, and with grateful and pious remembrance acknowledges, "And Thou heardest my voice. For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the Sea; and the floods compassed me about: all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me." Here the prophet contemplates the casting him into the Sea by the mariners as done by God. The men were but *His* hand. He had left them no choice, no alternative. Hence the becoming admission, "For Thou hadst cast me into the deep." The rest of verse 3rd is very much a quotation from David (Psalm 42, 7), when he says, "Deep called unto deep at the noise of Thy water-spouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me." We should here observe the wonderful fulness and adaptation of Scripture for every variety of case. And, like Jonah, the sorrowing child of God should be acquainted with the suitability to himself of the instructions and analogous circumstances recorded in the Book of God. Jonah may have thought of the trials of Job, of Joseph forsaken of his brethren, and of other similar instances. But the experience and the genius of the inspired sweet singer of Israel seem especially to have touched him. He sympathizes with the sensations of the Psalmist amidst the terrific display of the elements of Nature. He was *encircled* by the floods of the vast and deep expanse of the waters of the Mediterranean. In that abyss, beneath the agitated surface of which the fish roamed with him, he had a pious consciousness that all Nature's elements originated with Jehovah and were controlled by Him. To Him therefore he must look for deliverance and felicity. "All Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight: yet I will look again toward Thy Holy Temple." Doubtless the prophet experienced much agitation and trouble of spirit. His internal convictions, views, feelings, fears, desires, and aspirations, may have been answerable to the troubled external scene. Moreover the Spirit of God was dealing with him as a chastened and repentant spiritual Israelite. He was well nigh borne down by a sense of his

guilt and a consideration of his circumstances. Hence we hear him in the 4th verse despondingly exclaim, "I am cast out of Thy sight." Still "to the upright there ariseth light in the midst of darkness." The Apostle says "perplexed, but not in despair." The prophet was truly contrite in spirit. And, when the heart is thus broken, there is hope. Accordingly we immediately hear this believer rally, "yet (nevertheless) I will look again to Thy Holy Temple."

How significant and full of meaning is this purpose of Jonah. But a short time since we saw him, as it were, quitting the Holy Land with its Sanctuary. He had risen up to flee from its ordinances and opportunities, "to flee from the presence of the Lord." What an anomaly in the spiritual man, in the man of God! Was he not temporarily beside himself in thus disregarding the honour of the God of Israel, and the salvation of perishing sinners, whom he might be instrumental in saving, in pursuing a course of disobedient and perverse selfishness until he found himself in such a position as he describes in verses 5, 6, 7? "The waters compassed me about, even to the soul (rather *life*): the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms (*cuttings*) of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption (the pit or deep), O Lord, my God. When my soul (*life*) fainted within me, I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto Thee into Thine Holy Temple."

Now that he was brought to himself, the prophet says, "I will look again toward Thy Holy Temple." And probably he not only means idolaters, but includes also the children of God when they allow themselves in perversity, when he says, verse 8, "They, that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy." That he had a particular reference to himself appears from what follows, verse 9, "But I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed." (He had likely vowed that, if delivered, he would readily and cheerfully go to

Nineveh). "Salvation is of the Lord." The last words are surely most expressive and full of meaning. Jonah had now the full assurance of hope that he would be delivered from the grave, and enabled again to look toward and behold the "holy and beautiful house", the Temple of Jehovah. There he would gratefully remember the goodness of the 'Lord his God.' He would joyfully draw nigh to Him with the multitude of His worshipping people. He would declare His love and forbearance. He would have fainted, had he not, like David, "believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living." He was thoroughly persuaded that he would. And this Divine goodness was leading him to renewed repentance and resolutions of thankful acknowledgment. He ascribed all the glory of his safety and restoration to the pure and unmerited grace of Jehovah. He concludes with the summary, 'Salvation is of the Lord.' He knew this long before, but he knew it, he saw it now in a manner much more awful and impressive than formerly. And therefore his tongue speaks the praises of the Lord.

When brought to this state of mind by the sanctifying and renewing influences of the Holy Ghost, he was restored to the green earth and to the society of living men. "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

What a vast field of contemplation the dealings of God with His children open up! Observe, He will not suffer sin in them, He will in any wise reprove them. But who will not subscribe to the sentiment of Eliphaz? "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty."* "For," says the inspired wise man, "whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."†

Let us all hasten to make our calling and election sure by embracing and cordially submitting to the Lord Jesus Christ. Union to Him constitutes the sinner an adopted child of God. And all are welcome in the day of the merciful visitation to

* Joh 5, 17.

† Proverbs 3, 12.

this union. The Spirit and the Bride repeat what is written in the Word and what was spoken by Jesus Himself upon earth, "Come." Now is the accepted time. It may be, now or never. Oh! come then without any delay.

And, O Christian, walk worthy of thy high and holy vocation. Glorify God by a conversation becoming the Gospel. Be not, become not an occasion of danger or stumbling to either the disciples of Christ or the unenlightened voyager who is sailing with thee to the eternal world. Rather strive to be honoured to save the souls of many from death eternal by leading them to the only Refuge of the guilty, to Him who is the "man" predicted as the "hiding-place from the storm and a covert from the tempest." And, when, O believer in Jesus, Thou art overtaken by sin and backsliding, hasten to return to God by prayer. Exercise implicit confidence in Him. Trust in Him at all times. Remember His love. It is everlasting, undeserved, unchanged. Behold it in the prodigal's welcome. Behold it in His dealings with Jonah. Behold it in all His Word and ways towards His people. Never forget, salvation from first to last is of the Lord. To Him be glory, dominion, and praise, world without end. Amen.

Let us pray.

May Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, apply by the efficacious grace of His Holy Spirit the solemn lessons of His Word to which our attention has now been turned. Lord, make us Thine by godly repentance and true faith in Thy Son. Make us prayerful, humble, and holy. May nothing keep us from taking refuge in Jesus. May we be justified freely by Thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ. May we find pardon and peace in Him. May we be cleansed from our pollution in His Blood and sanctified by His Spirit. May the life, that we shall henceforth live in the flesh, be by the faith of Thy Beloved Son who loved us and gave Himself for us. May we with His peculiar people be purified unto Himself. May we be zealous of all good works. May our future lives show that we are alive unto God.

Enable us to remember that all our work in saving ourselves or in aiding our brethren must be done while in the body. May we therefore work while it is day, because the night is at hand when none of us will be able to work. Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, may we do it with all our might, because there is no work, wisdom, device, or understanding in the grave to which we are hastening.

Grant us all, O Lord, true repentance and Thy Holy Spirit. And, where Thou hast already bestowed repentance and remission of sins, may they be experienced in new and fuller abundance.

Bless all who are in authority over us, our Civil Rulers, our Maritime Officers, and our dear Christian Pastors. May they all, and may we glorify Thee, and find gracious acceptance through Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory everlasting. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 29, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

SIXTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 103, 19.

Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, we would now draw nigh to Thee in humble adoration. Praise be Thy condescending grace for the provision which Thou hast made to enable us, guilty sinners, to come unto Thee at all times. Thou hast constituted Thy Only-begotten Son as our High Priest and Mediator. We bless Thy most Holy Name that through Him we have access with boldness in every time of our need.

Lord, every time is a time of need with us. The time of prosperity and the time of adversity, the time of early and the time of advanced life, the time of calm and the time of storm, the time when on shore and the time when at sea—each time has special need of Thy merciful favour and sanctifying Spirit. Oh, vouchsafe to regard us for the sake of Thy Beloved Son with Thy tender compassion and love. Blot out for His sake our innumerable sins and make us conformed to Thy holy image.

We adore Thee, Almighty Father, for the wisdom and undeviating steadiness with which Thou accomplishest Thy purposes, whether man be willing or unwilling. In the history before us we behold how Thou didst in the largeness of Thy beneficence and the sovereignty of Thy grace save the heathen mariners, with whom Thy servant was sailing, with an everlasting salvation. We behold too that whom Thou lovest Thou correctest and bringest Thy spiritual children, whom Thou hast redeemed and sanctified in Christ Jesus, by the discipline of severe affliction and trial to a right

state of mind and feeling, to self-denial and a cordial acquiescence in Thy wise and holy will. And we behold Thy sparing goodness and the riches of Thy mercy and loving-kindness to multitudes of sinners ready to perish who knew Thee not, who were trusting in lying vanities instead of the Living God, and who were provoking the Holy One of Israel to destroy them for their wickedness. Even such, O Thou who art most merciful, did it please Thee to spare and save, to send them, after overcoming every obstacle, a prophet, a messenger of Thy truth and mercy. And Thou didst accompany Thy Word with the demonstration of Thy Spirit so that the men of Nineveh evinced 'repentance unto life,' and did honour Thy glorious name and attributes by calling upon Him who alone can hear the prayer of the sinner and who ever waits to be gracious to the humble and contrite in spirit.

Bless, O most gracious God, we earnestly beseech Thee our present meditations upon these and similar topics. Bless our assembling together for Thy holy worship, and that we may give heed to the things that belong to our spiritual and eternal welfare. Bless all who may be engaged like ourselves in seeking to remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Especially do we commend unto Thy protection and richest blessings all seamen and travellers upon the great deep, who seek to honour Thee in the exercises of Christianity this day. Though their sanctuary be a frail bark floating upon the Ocean, may it be as the House of God and the Gate of Heaven to their soul. We would plead Thy loving and encouraging promise, O Thou Divine Head of the Church, that, whenever two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou wilt be in the midst of them. Vouchsafe its sweet fulfilment this day in the experience of all Thy earnest disciples, and of all who may be enquiring what they must do to be saved. Grant even unto us its blissful accomplishment in the outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit upon us collectively and individually. May our bodies be His temples, sanctified and set apart to the service of God. May our souls be the priests of the Lord who shall offer unto Thee the sacrifices of a contrite spirit.

Have mercy upon those who care not for these things. Oh, may those, who go down to the sea in ships and are yet far from Thee, be brought nigh in repentance and saving faith. Our heart's aspiration for all men is that they may be saved through the blood and righteousness of Thy Only Begotten Son Christ Jesus, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be all glory, world without end. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Paraphrase 50, 4.

Read 2nd Chap. of 1 Corinthians.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah III. 1.

God will ever accomplish His purposes. He is without variableness or shadow of turning. He uniformly designs in wisdom, and executes with infallible certainty. Infinite in all perfection, Eternal and Unchangeable in His knowledge and power, He will fulfil all His pleasure. His enemies, and sometimes His own people, may oppose or be dissatisfied. No matter, nothing is so certain as that the Divine will must prevail. How presumptuous and absurd is it to run counter to the Most High ! " Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him ? " Man may concur or resist. Either way, the result shall be in accordance with the determination of the Eternal mind.

We have already seen some of the beneficial consequences of Jehovah's dealings both with Jonah and with the mariners. Others remain to be observed. God had an immediate end in view. He had a vast company of perishing sinners, of immortal beings whom He had resolved to benefit for time and for eternity. It was with a view to them, the inhabitants of the greatest city then in the world, that the first especial revelation to Jonah, of which we read, was made. The message ran thus, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me."

Such a message, especially in the view that it might imply mercy to the Ninevites, (and we know that Jonah regarded it in this light) ought surely to have afforded satisfaction and pleasure to a man of God. In whom shall we expect to behold "the merciful man," if not in the servant and prophet of that God who is pre-eminently "merciful?" Yet how sadly are we sometimes disappointed! How vain to trust in man! An example of this we have in the reluctance and resolute perversity of him who was commissioned to go as a messenger to Nineveh. Instead of submissively, cheerfully, and hopefully proceeding on his high and honourable embassy, we read, "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

But, though most unwilling to enter into or carry out the plan of the Most High, we see that the prophet was made willing in the day of the Lord's power, when the arrows of the Almighty were within him and the terrors of God did set themselves in array against him. Being now brought to a better mind, we may look for better things in him and from him. He is now a repentant sinner, and his sin is forgiven. For, wherever a gracious God vouchsafes the spirit of true repentance, He uniformly bestows also the blessing of pardon and restoration. Accordingly we read, "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the

preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. (1, 2, 3.).

The undeviating determination and compassion of God are here strikingly manifest. He has not forgotten or been diverted from his merciful intentions towards Nineveh. All the prophet's obstinacy, selfishness, and perversity cannot in the slightest degree affect His purpose or prevent its accomplishment. These will assuredly draw down upon the culprit himself the correction and scourging of Him who is Eternal and Holy. But they will not interfere with the mercy in reserve for the Ninevites. Nay, the Lord will so deal with His servant as that he shall be glad to obey and fulfil the Divine pleasure by going to Nineveh. Let the children of God hereby be admonished to wait upon the Lord and cheerfully comply with His mandates. How instructive to every disciple of Jesus is the invocation of the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word."* Verily this spirit of dutiful and loving obedience to every injunction of the King of Zion is what should be aimed at and cherished by each ransomed follower.

How absurd is it for a child of God to be rebellious and self-willed against the Heavenly Parent! For "He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered?"† Had Jonah at once complied with the word of the Lord, had he sought to concur with the high behest that was laid upon him, he would have avoided all the danger and suffering into which he plunged himself. He would then have executed his charge with comfort and been an honoured example of devotedness to God. As it is, he is recorded as a warning to the believer to take heed against carnal policy and implicitly to pursue that course which advances the honour of Jehovah. To this every pardoned and justified sinner must be brought by the influence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or, if that Divine Agent be resisted and grieved, by severe chastisement in Providence.

* Psalm 103, 20.

† Job 9, 4.

We witness in Jonah the nature and proof of genuine repentance. When first the word of the Lord came to him, he disregarded its importance and disobeyed its authority. When it came the second time to him, he "arose and went unto Nineveh according to the word of the Lord." Wherever that repentance, which is the fruit of the Spirit, is in operation, there will be a turning from sin in general and from the particular sin especially which has been the cause of stumbling. So it obviously was in the case before us. So it will ever be with the contrite and restored transgressor.

As the Lord was glorified in visiting Jonah with the rod for his sin, so is He glorified in reinstating him in his office. He delights in mercy, and, though He might, had He been so pleased, been glorified in the permanent ejection of the disobedient prophet from his sacred office, even while He accepted of his repentance and again acknowledged him as saved by faith, He preferred being glorified in His backsliding servant's full restoration to the prophetic commission, and in causing him gratefully to embark upon the very business which at first had been so distasteful to him. Hence, "the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh according to the word of the Lord." Thus we see the method of the God of grace. As, when He pardons any of the children of men, He justifies, sanctifies and glorifies them, so when He restores a backslider, his wont is to restore fully. His goodness and loving-kindness are never stinted or niggardly, but always abundant and overflowing. Only He insists upon compliance with His commands, upon the entire and unreserved yielding of the will and all the powers of the man to Him. To Jonah the word of the Lord is, "Arise, go, preach the preaching that I bid thee." Do now what I told thee before to do, deliver the message with which I formerly entrusted thee, be prepared with fidelity, love, and fearlessness to speak whatsoever I shall command. To every Minister and member of the body of Christ the word of Inspiration is, "And, whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to

God and the Father by Him." . . . "And, whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men."* He that drinks most deeply of this spirit, and follows most closely this rule, will be the happiest Christian and will be most honoured by the Head and Bridegroom of the Church.

Jonah may have had objections to go to Nineveh on account of the wealth, greatness, number, and wickedness of its population, as well as by reason of prejudice, selfishness, and pride. He may have been under the influence of that sinful fear of man which bringeth a snare. He may have dreaded to go to the proud capital of the Assyrian Empire. Of its grandeur we may form some idea from knowing that it was larger than Babylon, (it being sixty miles or three days' journey in circuit, while Babylon is only said to have compassed forty-eight miles), its walls were one hundred feet high, of proportionate breadth, and fortified by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high. The word of God, addressing Nineveh, says, "Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven."† With great propriety then does the Inspired narrative declare, "Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey." Yet to this city there was despatched, whether for judgement or mercy, but one humble Jewish prophet. So little does the Sovereign of the universe make of the pomp and splendour and vanities of this world. He sends to this queen of cities a Galilean as His messenger, and gives him courage, ability, and faithfulness to declare the awful tidings of its threatened destruction. "And Jonah began to enter the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (v. 4.)

So soon as the prophet entered the domain of this lordly emporium, he commenced his awful proclamation of woe and ruin. Whether he enlarged upon the solemn topics or simply reiterated from early morning until evening's dawn the august monition contained in the words of the text, we know not. Certain it is, that he attracted the most profound and

* Colossians 3, 17, 33.

† Nahum 3, 16.

general attention. He had a message from God to the Ninevites, from the God of Israel, the Only True God, the Omnipotent, the Jehovah of Hosts. How terrific the message! With what undissembling straight-forwardness was it spoken! With what unparalleled power was it accompanied!

"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Probably there was no explanation how this should take place, whether by fire, water, tempest, earthquake, by an angel from Heaven or by a miracle with the elements of Nature. The inhabitants were simply and solemnly informed that after "forty days" ruin would be the allotted portion of themselves and their city. It is remarkable that the period of forty days is mentioned in Scripture in connection with a variety of important transactions. When the world was deluged because of the wickedness of all flesh, the rain descended upon the earth for *forty days*. When the Patriarch Jacob was embalmed, this was the time that elapsed in having it done, "And forty days were fulfilled for him; (for so are fulfilled the days of those that were embalmed)."^{*} Moses was in the Mount with God *forty days and forty nights*.[†] When the prophet Elijah fled from Jezebel, and was miraculously fed, he "went in the strength of that meat *forty days and forty nights* unto Horeb, the mount of God."[‡] The temptation of our Blessed Redeemer by Satan lasted for *forty days and forty nights*. And the calamity, which was threatened to Nineveh, was only suspended for *forty days*.

That the impending woe, predicted against the mighty mass of human beings living in Nineveh, *was not* absolute and irretrievable, is evident both from the prophet's understanding of it and that of the people immediately concerned. Had the Ninevites believed that *it was*, they would have been hopeless and would have given themselves up to despair. But they did not believe that it was, at least they had some hope in God, the God of Israel. The preaching of the prophet was accompanied by the saving power of the Holy

^{*} Genesis 50, 3.

[†] Exodus 24, 18.

[‡] 1 Kings 19, 8.

Ghost to their hearts. "So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them." (v. 5).

What an admirable specimen have we here of candour and religious honesty. They admitted that the message was from the Only True and Living God. They received Jonah as a true and well attested prophet, mainly perhaps from the power that attended the word of truth from his lips. It may be that they had heard of his being commissioned to visit them and of what had transpired to him. Perhaps they had learned from the mariners of the ship of Tarshish what they had witnessed and experienced. Nothing is more likely than that those good men would spread abroad the fame of "the God of heaven, that hath made the sea and the dry land," who had done great and gracious things for them. They would delight to tell of His marvellous and miraculous doings, which they had beheld. Be this as it may, the power of the truth spoken and the conviction of their own conscience were such as led the people of Nineveh to give the most implicit credence to the awe-inspiring statement of Jonah. And they without the least delay set about the most solemn and general humiliation possible. In this, all—the whole million of immortal creatures that constituted the population of Nineveh may be regarded as concurring. The highest led the way in repentance, and the people at large cordially went along with them. "For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne (probably the king was seated on his throne when he received the message of the prophet, indicating that reverence for God and that respect for His servant which were good evidences of a favourable state of mind), and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." He did more. He caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." (verses 6, 7, and 8).

Here then was humiliation of the most sincere and profound character. It was expressed by the most earnest prayerfulness and by universal fasting which extended to all the inferior animals. Surely there never was such a fast as this. The lowing of the kine, the bleating of the sheep, and the natural expressions of hunger and uneasiness on the part of all the cattle in addition to the loud supplications of the rational creatures who were prostrate before God, must have given an unparelled aspect of solemnity and contrition to the whole scene. But why, it may be asked, oblige the inferior animals to fast on such an occasion? No doubt fasting is an appropriate mean of grace for man when giving himself to repentance and deep humiliation before the Lord. But why require it of the innocent brute creation? To this it might be enough to say that it was evidently acceptable to the Most High, and therefore was right. But may we not add that in all probability the horse and other animals had been rendered by their owners instruments of cruelty and wickedness against mankind, whilst themselves had suffered much cruel usage. If so, there may have been an apt or expressive deprecation of an impending calamity, in which they would share, required of them. Moreover, if God granted the Ninevites pardon, the cattle would be benefited in their treatment and the uses to which they would be turned. Well then might they be required to fast, because of the past, and in hope of future good. How admirable is the whole picture! We know not which to praise most, the king, his nobles, or the people at large. This king, whether Pul or a preceding monarch, is immortalized for the readiness to repent and turn unto God which he evinced. Very few who have ever swayed a regal sceptre deserve to be held in better estimation than he should be. How happy too was he in his courtiers and in his subjects, when all as one man repented and were saved!

It behoves all those, to whom the word of the Lord has come, to take heed lest Nineveh's repentance shall in the day of final reckoning testify against them. Let us be awed by the declaration of the Meek and Lowly Jesus to those who hardened themselves in their sin and rejected the offered remedy. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with

this generation and shall condemn it : because they repented at the preaching of Jonas : and behold a greater than Jonas is here.”* It behoves all who live under the Christian Dispensation to take heed lest their aggravated sin, if they believe not on the Lord Jesus Christ, shall draw down upon them enhanced condemnation.

How strikingly is the interposing grace of God manifest in the repentance of the Ninevites ! Neither the preacher nor his preaching was what we would have been disposed to call superior. And yet what preacher or what preaching was ever so effective ? How wonderful is it to mark an untoward man, compelled to go to Nineveh, and denounce the wickedness of its people, and warn them of ruin at the door, so felicitous. Only by implication is there any mercy in his preaching. Yet all Nineveh from the King on his throne to the meanest of its inhabitants repents at the preaching of this man. Do we ask, how is this ? Just because the Spirit of the Lord has done it. He has a time to work and to save, and, when that time is come, all obstacles are easily overcome, all difficulties vanish. He works by means of many or few, as it pleaseth Him. Very often humble, and, humanly speaking, inadequate instruments are raised up and employed. He does this “that no flesh should glory in His presence.”† How fully the great Apostle of the Gentiles knew this ! He says to the Corinthians, “ And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”‡

In the success that attended Jonah’s preaching and in the absence or withholding it from many other and better servants of the God of Israel, we are taught that “it is not of

* Matthew 12, 41.

† 1st Corinthians 1, 29.

‡ 1st Corinthians 2, 1-5.

him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."* It is not by the results, praised be the God of Infinite Wisdom and Grace, it is not by the numbers to whom their Ministry proves a blessing for eternity, that the acceptance with God, the honour, and the felicity of His faithful servants shall be determined. No. It is by their personal character. "For," says the Apostle, "we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish."†

How much greater was Jonah's success than that which attended the labours of Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, and many much more eminent and more devoted men of God than he was. True, their holiness, prayerfulness, self-denial, and writings have been blessings to an extent that we cannot estimate, yet the immediate fruits fell far short of what Jonah saw as the result of his ministry. Perhaps this is analogous to what the wise man tells us, "that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all."‡ Certain it is that the effects of Jonah's preaching, as compared with those of the preaching of others, most strikingly proclaims that it is not by might nor by power but by the Spirit of the Lord that salvation flows to the human soul. Had God chosen a more illustrious prophet than Jonah in the great work of saving Nineveh, we would have been in danger of attributing something to the man. As it is, we cannot but see that all was of God and His sovereign grace. To Him in every case all the glory is exclusively due. To Him then let us ever ascribe it.

How omnipotent is the Spirit of grace! He blessed even the brief declarations of the prophet for the salvation of probably more than a million of sinners ready to perish. All the length, that hope could carry them, was to enable them to say, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn

* Romans 9, 10.

† 2nd Corinthians 2, 13.

‡ Ecclesiastes 9, 11.

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What an encouragement on the one hand, and a warning on the other, is here presented to all who have not yet come to Christ, in and through whom alone God is merciful and gracious! Every hearer of the Gospel has most likely had better opportunities of knowing the will of God and the way of Salvation than the Ninevites. Observe then the gracious character of God, and remember that with increased responsibility blessed is he, whosoever is not offended in Christ. It may be that the Ninevites had previously, and especially by the mariners who had been associated with Jonah (and whom also he had been honoured to lead to the saving knowledge of the Truth) obtained some acquaintance with the nature and religion of Jehovah. If so, they were thus by grace and in Providence prepared for repentance. In the conduct then of these good seamen we have an example for all recipients of the grace of God, and particularly mariners, to follow! Let such ever seek to be the bearers of good and of good tidings to the people, and the places whither God may conduct them. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." Isaiah 32, 2. Amen.

Let us sing Paraphrase 56, 4.

Let us pray.

How excellent, O Lord, is Thy Name in all the earth! That Glorious Name will we praise "for Thy loving-kindness and for Thy truth: "for Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name." For all the interpositions of Thy mercy, and all the manifestations of Thy grace in the experience of sinners ready to perish, would we praise Thy most Blessed Name. For the repentance and salvation of as many

of the children of Adam as have ever believed to the saving of the soul, we give Thee unfeigned and hearty thanks.

May we ourselves, O Thou God of all good, Thou Giver of all good, be the subjects of Thy Spirit's saving operations. Grant unto us repentance unto life and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus dwell in us. Thus may Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. May we be rooted and grounded in His love. May the repentance of the Ninevites, and the piety of the mariners of Tarshish, recorded for our instruction, be indeed blessed to our souls. Forbid that the men of Nineveh and the heathen seamen should in the great day of account rise up in the judgement and condemn us. Rather may we seek to be like them, and with them, monuments of Thy sovereign grace.

May the dominion of our risen and glorified Redeemer extend from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. May many of all people become the willing subjects of His holy sway. Bless the nations of the earth. Oh! that they all knew Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, whom to know is life eternal. Bless our own country, highly favoured by Thy love. Oh! that her influence and exertions were ever put forth on behalf of the best interests of mankind. Bless our Queen, her Majesty's Royal Consort, and the youthful family entrusted to them. Bless all in the high places of the land. Bless the people at large. Bless all who travel by land or water upon lawful business. Bless those, whose vocation requires them to go down to the sea in ships, with repentance, faith and love. Mercifully pardon and accept of us through Jesus Christ. Amen,

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 25, 6.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

SEVENTH SUNDAY.

Let us worship God by singing to His praise in Psalm 41, 1.

Let us pray.

We would now seek to draw nigh to Thee, O Lord, deeply impressed with a sense of Thy great goodness, and with the conviction that "Thy mercy is in the heavens; and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." Thou art indeed most merciful. Thou wilt for the sake of Thy Dear Son show Thy Covenant to them that fear Thee. Of this most glorious Covenant of redeeming love Thou wilt ever be mindful. We are animated and encouraged to rejoice in the Lord always; for Thou keepest covenant and rememberest mercy from generation to generation.

We draw nigh to Thee, Almighty Father, profoundly sensible that the salvation of the soul is entirely of grace, of Thine own sovereign goodness and love. We observe this in the case of all those who have been made partakers of the great redemption purchased by the precious blood of Christ, and we know it experimentally, if we have indeed fled for refuge to the hope set before us in the Gospel.

Give us grace to seek not only to be ourselves saved, but also to be fellow-workers with Thee in the salvation of those who are ready to perish. May we have the very spirit of our Lord, who loved perishing sinners and laid down His life that they might attain life everlasting. May we ever rejoice, like the holy angels, when even one sinner repents. May we rejoice and triumph when many are turned unto righteousness.

Keep us, Good Lord, we beseech Thee, from all selfish, carnal, narrow, and unworthy feelings in regard to any of

our brethren of mankind. May Thy honour be always our sincere and single aim. May we individually be able to address Thee as "God, my exceeding joy." By nearness to Thee, and the constant experience of Thy satisfying fullness, may we in reference to creature comforts be enabled to rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and to weep as though we wept not. Teach us to be able to say with Thy servant of old, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord."

We would praise and adore Thee with admiring gratitude for the wondrous evidences contained in Thy Holy Word of Thy power and willingness to save lost sinners. In what Thou didst for the mariners of Tarshish, for the repentant Ninevites, for the three thousand who on the day of Pentecost cried out, "What shall we do?" and for many more both of the Jews and the Gentiles, both of those who dwelt upon the land and those who were associated with the sea, we behold Thy marvellous ability and Thy still more marvellous condescension and love. To Thy most Holy Name, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed for ever all the glory.

Bless, we entreat Thee, Father of mercies, our religious fellowship and exercises upon the present occasion. May our frail bark be to us as the Temple of the Lord. May Thy gracious presence and Spirit be vouchsafed to quicken and sanctify us. Bless to us the consideration of the recorded truths of Thy Word. Bless in like manner all who may be similarly engaged with ourselves. Especially do we commend to Thy protection and distinguishing love those whose vocation requires them this day to be at sea. Bless the mariner. May he reflect upon the awful eternity to which he is sailing. And, oh! do Thou guide him so that by now fleeing to Jesus for the safety of his soul he may finally reach the haven of Heavenly rest and felicity. Promote, O Thou God of holiness, the sanctification of the Sabbath at sea and on shore. Enable us to remember it and keep it holy, as we would enter upon that Sabbatism which remaineth for the people of God hereafter.

Mercifully hear these our humble and earnest prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy Beloved Son. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Paraphrase 32.

Read Isaiah II.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Jonah IV. 1.

Many a faithful Minister of God's Word has been so sadly cast down at the want of success in his Ministry as to be almost ready to relinquish the work in despair. But did any of us ever know of a man of God or a servant of Jesus Christ being grieved and desirous of giving up both his life and his work because God had prospered and blessed his instrumentality for the good of very many immortal beings who had been sinners ready to perish? If we ever did or ever should, we might well call to mind the saying of the wise man, "there is no new thing under the sun." How well with him may we amplify this truth and add, "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, see this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us." The disobedient prophet's history would be a case in point to prove that the same spirit had long since been manifested, and the same kind of sin long ago committed.

The story of Jonah is truly a wondrous one. After his restoration to earth and safety he seems to have been glad to

* Ecclesiastes 1, 9, 10.

obey 'the word of the Lord,' which came to him the second time to go to Nineveh and preach the message of Jehovah to its inhabitants. And never perhaps was an address, a discourse or a preaching more effective than that delivered by this messenger. He was the honoured instrument of awaking and turning to the Lord the whole population of great and guilty Nineveh. We read, "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not."

Surely then we might have expected that none would be so joyful at such a result as the preacher, whose message had been so eminently blessed. But here too we are taught the needful lesson. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" So far from this affording satisfaction to the prophet, and causing him with gratitude to rejoice that many sinners had repented, "it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry." What renders this the more strange and sinful, it was with God's mercy and wisdom that Jonah quarrelled and was enraged. He dares in his peevishness and sullenness to assail even the Most High. True, there is a degree of submission and deference expressed, "And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray Thee, O Lord." He would not, like the infidel, with presumptuous malignity assail the Only Wise God. But, like the perverse child who, when out of temper, calculates upon the tenderness and forbearance of the loving parent, and indulges in groundless complaints, so here the sinning prophet, while absurdly enraged because the mercy of the God of Israel had been extended and applied to the sinful heathen, yet calculates upon the exercise of that mercy to himself, a most untoward Israelite.

Such appears to have been the state of feeling in which Jonah now was, and under the influence of which he drew nigh to his Heavenly Father in prayer. We may observe in him pride, a haughty spirit, moodiness and melancholy. His benevolence was restricted to his own country; his selfishness

made him think mainly of his own honour. Had he been strong in faith and philanthropic in affection, he would have known that God would take care both of His own glory and His servant's reputation ; and, as to the honour of his country, he would have rested in the assurance that the spread of True Religion and the conversion of the Gentiles would never diminish the true honour of Israel, but rather enhance it, if Israel be a fellow-worker with God.

The tone of the narrative seems to imply that Jonah not only wished but hoped that Nineveh would be destroyed. Hence it is probable that he delivered only the message of wrath to the Ninevites. And it is evident that they repented against his will. He had all along feared, however, that this would be the result, "I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country ? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish : for I know that Thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil." We might have supposed that he would be afraid lest he should have judgement without mercy, if he would show none. But, alas ! it was otherwise for the present with the unhappy prophet. Oh ! how could one, who had had so much forgiven, love to little and be so petulant ? Yet such is frail, sinful man, even after he has been made a partaker of Divine grace, when he forgets to ask himself, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive ?" when he forgets of what spirit he is, when he again rebels against his Heavenly and Gracious Benefactor. Hence we hear Jonah, "Wherefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me ; for 'tis better for me to die than to live."

This is a very sad exhibition of the sinfulness of sin and of the sinfulness of human nature. It is far worse than any of the impatience or irritableness or complaining of Job. We may hear him saying occasionally, "Oh, that God would hide me in the grave !" But we can sympathize with the awful suffering and grief which prompt him to utter such a desire. It was only till his dreadful calamity should have overpast that he sought such an asylum, conscious that, as a child of God, his spirit would then be safe and happy, and that in

due season his body too would experience a glorious resurrection. Elijah also, when he fled from the impious Jezebel, went a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper-tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said (we shall understand the nature of the case better if we bear in mind that in all probability this honoured man of God had received an intimation of the Divine purpose to translate him to glory without tasting of death), "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." But, though in all this we can perceive the weakness and the frailty of man, which else we can scarcely discern in Elijah, we may say, "was there not a reason!" and a reason vastly different from any thing that Jonah could allege. Hear his own statement which, though in one particular quite erroneous, is otherwise doubtless true, "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy Covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." (1 Kings 19, 4, 10).

In both of these distinguished worthies we can easily understand their wishes. But Jonah's is far more perplexing, and dishonouring to the character of a believer; so much so indeed that we almost doubt sometimes if the prophet was a spiritual Israelite at all. But we know that he was notwithstanding. And, when we look at him and the wonderful salvation of a vast multitude that God wrought by him, let us appreciate the truth spoken by the Great Apostle, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* Had the Lord been pleased to effect such a wondrous and most gracious salvation at Nineveh by one of his most amiable and excellent servants, how prone would we have been to ascribe some part of the effect to the influence of the character of the man. But, as it was, we have no room left for this. We must

* 1 Corinthians 4, 7.

therefore give all the glory to Jehovah alone. This we should do always. Here we are constrained to do it.

When we observe the provocations of man, how often are we amazed at the forbearance and goodness of God! How strikingly is this emotion awakened in the instance before us! Had God brought Jonah to a sense of his guilt and folly by inflicting upon him some judicial visitation, who would not have said that the prophet had richly merited it? But God's ways are not like our ways, His thoughts are not like our thoughts. As the heavens are high above the earth, so do His thoughts and ways surpass ours. He will bring Jonah to himself in an effectual way, a way wherein condescension, long-suffering patience, and love shall be prominent. Meanwhile we read of God's forbearance and of His humbling Himself to reason the matter with His servant, "Then said the Lord, Dost thou well to be angry?" (v. 4).

We are next directed to an incidental part of the history of Jonah's connection with Nineveh. (v. 5.) "So Jonah went out of the city (had gone out), and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city." How long the prophet remained in Nineveh we are uncertain. It is evident that he had retired from it anterior to the expiration of the 'forty days,' of which he had been commissioned to speak. The evident repentance of the people had caused him most unworthy and shameful sorrow. Still, though he feared that they would be spared, he thought that peradventure some judgement might be visited upon Nineveh. He felt a great interest in what should be the issue. That he might witness it, he erected for himself a temporary dwelling, a booth composed of the boughs of trees. Here, no doubt, after all his efforts he would suffer from wind and weather. And most justly might God have left him to do so. But here again the wonderful compassion of the Most High visited him. We may well imagine that his fretful, repining temper would add to the inconveniences of his residence. Yet God did not deal with him in judgement, or cause him to experience in all its bitterness his sin and folly in withdrawing from Nineveh, where he might now have been comforta-

bly sojourning, honoured by its inhabitants, and an unspeakable blessing to them. On the contrary God met him with more mercies. (v. 6). "And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow (shade) over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd."

Jonah appears to have had naturally a most unhappy temper, which was liable to excitement from trifles, that good sense, and especially the fear of God, ought long ere now to have checked and corrected. Very small matters seem to have been sufficient unduly to cast him down or unduly to lift him up. His grief previous to the miraculous growth of the gourd, and his exceeding gladness on account of it, are instances. Something certainly ought to be allowed for natural temperament. Persons of this class are on the one hand liable to greater depression than others, and on the other are apt to experience much greater pleasure. In the prophet's case the evil and inconvenience greatly outweighed any benefit. The gourd is supposed to have been "the castor-oil tree, which with its broad palmate leaves extends a grateful shade over the parched traveller." Its leaves are said to be like those of the Oriental plane-tree, but "larger, smoother, and of a deeper hue."

For this gourd Jonah was "exceeding glad." In his own estimate of the happiness afforded by this creature comfort he might have seen that his sorrows were not consistent with a spiritual mind or one in whom the Spirit of holiness had a dwelling. Yet very probably he had persuaded himself that he was actuated by a zeal for God. Alas! the deceitfulness of the human heart and carnal mind. How often is that grief which we would ascribe in our egotism, or vanity, or pride, or sectarianism, to a regard for Divine things, or fidelity to Christ, or love of purity, how often is it occasioned, if the truth were known or we would allow ourselves to know the truth, by frowardness, by wounded vanity, by the determination to glorify and gratify self at all hazards.

Jonah was "exceeding glad of the gourd," because in his circumstances he felt the comfort of it. Previous discomfort or deprivation will often enhance greatly the value of small

consolations. Yet heavenly wisdom would teach us not to be unduly elated, or immoderately depressed by the gain or loss of mere earthly and perishing good. With respect to every such thing we should bear in mind the Apostolic precept, "And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not."* The believer, who can fully sympathize with the hallowed breathing of the devout Psalmist after "God, my exceeding joy," will not present such a humbling and, it may be, a stumbling picture as that of the poor prophet before us. Nor will he render it needful that the wise Heavenly Parent should visit with chastisement as in the case of Jonah. It is true that every child of God is chastened. The wise would not be without it. Listen to the plaintive and pious Jeremiah, "O Lord, correct me, but with judgement, not in anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing." (10, 24.) But to the rebellious spirit of our prophet we could almost apply the word of sharp remonstrance addressed to idolatrous Israel, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backsliding shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts." (Jeremiah 2, 19).

Nothing is more certain than that God will not suffer sin in any of His children. He hates it especially in them. He will not allow them to seek or find in the creature that enjoyment which they should realize in Himself. Hence we read in verse 7, "But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." What a correct representation have we here of all earthly hopes and earthly happiness! We may have been "exceeding glad" in the anticipation or enjoyment of some perishing bliss. But, when our felicity appeared to be at its height, when the morning rose, a worm had been prepared which smote our "gourd that it withered." David's language teaches us whence alone to expect solid and lasting

* 1 Corinthians 7, 30.

satisfaction, "Lord, by Thy favour Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong ! Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled."

The agent in the withering of the gourd is instructive. It was a worm. Had it been uprooted by the rushing mighty wind, by the hurricane or the tornado, had the fire of God fallen from heaven upon it and consumed it, or had some terrible calamity overwhelmed it, the reproof had not been so humiliating as when it was assailed by such a contemptible foe as a worm. But who will not admire the wisdom of God in the mode He selected ? It was doubtless far more cutting to the prophet's pride than had his 'gourd' been destroyed by some unparalleled evil. There however stood the gourd as firmly rooted as ever, but it was now "withered," and so incapable of making him "exceeding glad" any more. How frequently does a righteous God in His providence wither some idol which we were allowing to usurp that place in our hearts which He demands for Himself !

How true is it that one trouble seldom comes alone ! This is remarkably observable in the case of repining, murmuring persons. Just as those who mark mercies will always have mercies to mark, so unreasonable complainers and misanthropists will always have something new about which to vent their spleen. So it happened with Jonah. "And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind (it should be rendered, a still, gentle east wind, which would therefore be the more suffocating and intolerable) ; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah that he fainted, and wished in himself to die (*he asked with his soul*), and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." How forcibly does the Lord, though with most amazing long-suffering and paternal condescension, appeal to the prophet respecting his ireful and repining disposition ! He had before been very angry and wished to die. He now justifies his anger and insists that he does well to be angry even unto death. And God said to Jonah, "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd !" And he said, "I do well to be

angry, even unto death." (Verse 9.) We know not whether the mercy and pity of God, or the perversity and presumption of this foolish man, be the more astonishing. And yet this is not all. The Divine mercy is still unexhausted, it flows freely in the remonstrance and reasoning of the Heavenly Parent. Then said the Lord, "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; also much cattle?" (Verses 10 and 11.)

Here we behold God asserting the interest He takes in His creatures and the regard He has for them, as the Maker and Father of mankind. He asks Jonah if from what he exhibited himself of attachment to his gourd he could not understand why the Proprietor of man's soul and body should not delight in sparing the repentant. Jonah's concern was for a short-lived gourd, which "came up in a night and perished in a night," for which he had not laboured, of which he was in no sense the proprietor or author. But the Ninevites were God's property, they were created to exist eternally (not to perish in a night like the gourd); not only, as their Maker, had the Lord a lively interest in them as 'the work of His hands', but as their Redeemer, the God of their salvation. They were now, as repentant sinners, unspeakably precious in His sight.

The peculiar consideration adduced by the Lord for forbearance and mercy is well worthy of observation. "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle."

We here see the Most High taking into account, as a reason for suspension of judgement, the amount of little children and of the inferior creatures that were in Nineveh. Both, we may suppose, had been deeply injured by the wickedness and cruelty of parents and masters. But the children shall not any longer suffer as heretofore by the heinous guilt of father and mother. The souls of infants are capable of

regeneration and salvation. Here are not fewer than a score thousand. How desirable that, as they have borne the image of the earthly Adam, they may also bear that of the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven !

They are docile, humble, unprejudiced, apt disciples to acquire saving knowledge of God. Of such is His Kingdom. A weighty reason, we can well perceive, was thus afforded for the preservation of Nineveh in the fact of not less than a hundred and twenty thousand persons, immortal beings in the early morning of existence, forming part of its population. Let us from this be more solemnly impressed with the importance and value of infancy and childhood. How will those then infant Ninevites give glory to the God of sparing love and mercy, if they are now the ransomed and sanctified of the Lord ! On their account, as well as for the sake of the cattle which had been the victims of man's sin, and for other causes, Nineveh did not then perish.

Even the Throne of Grace is not always sufficient to deter the selfishness and presumption of man. Even there he sometimes gives vent to his carnal opinions and feelings. Jonah prayed. (v, 2.)

Though God employed for His own glory in the salvation of great Nineveh an unworthy preacher, we are not to suppose that better men, prophets, and ministers of God have not in some other way been as highly honoured and useful. Witness the lives and writings of Jeremiah, &c. While Jonah is almost an offence, they refresh the Zion-ward traveller. While both the good and the evil are recorded, let us remember that the one is for warning, the other for imitation.

Let us pray.

Almighty and most Merciful Father, we again draw nigh unto Thee, our Heavenly Parent, in the name of our great Advocate, Jesus, Thy Beloved Son. Pour out upon us, we beseech Thee, Thy Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of adoption. And, while His influence and presence in us cause us to love and submit to Thee in all things with cordiality and cheer-

fulness, may He also lead us into all Truth. May we never bury the Truth in unrighteousness, may we never lose sight of it by the prevalence of sinful prejudice. Oh! how weak, erring, and vile is our unhallowed and selfish nature! By Thy Spirit do Thou remedy the evil in us. Make us partakers fully of Thy regenerating and sanctifying grace. May the Spirit of Christ dwell in us as a spirit of love to all our brethren of mankind. Without this charity we are "nothing" in Christ. Let us feel it in all its genuineness and ardour.

We adore Thee as the God of Salvation, who hast put the treasure of the Gospel in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of Thee and not of man. We praise Thee for the love and pity which Thou didst manifest to Nineveh. We rejoice that we behold in that instance a token of Thy good will to perishing sinners in general; whether Jews or Gentiles. We admire also the interest Thou didst manifest in little children in the case of Nineveh; and the regard that in Thy Holy Word Thou hast ever shown towards them. Thy benevolence is beautifully intimated in the care that Thou takest even of the lower creation. May we be merciful to beasts and every animal.

Make us not only to have the root of the matter in us, but also to walk worthy of our vocation. Oh! forbid that we should ever be an offence unto Christ or a stumbling-block to our fellow-men. May we adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour by a conversation becoming the Gospel.

Bless all our brethren of mankind. Bless our own country in all its interests, civil and religious. Bless her Majesty the Queen, her August Partner in life, and the children Thou hast committed to their charge. Bless all in authority under our Sovereign and over us. Bless superiors, inferiors, and equals. And now, Almighty God, we entreat Thee graciously to hear and accept of us through Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Lord. Amen.

Let us conclude the worship of God by singing in Psalm 26, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all.
Amen.

of God,
us 'all.

EIGHTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 23, 12.

Let us pray.

How excellent, O Lord, is Thy Name in all the earth ! "The eyes of all wait upon Thee ; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." May we be enabled, Almighty and most Merciful Father, as Thy redeemed children, unfeignedly to give thanks unto Thee. Thou art good, Thy mercy endureth for ever. We would praise Thee for Thy goodness to us. Oh ! that we may be taught with grateful adoration to say, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth."

All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints magnify Thy Name. We worship Thee as the God of universal nature. Thou hast manifested in Creation, and Thou unfoldest in Thy Divine Providence, Thy wisdom, power, and goodness. May we be taught how to profit by those discoveries of Thy character and will. Yet, O most Merciful Father, we acknowledge that we need other teaching than can be derived from these to make us wise unto salvation. "Thy way is in the sea and Thy path is in the mighty waters, and Thy footsteps are not known." We need a key to unlock the treasures of wisdom and instruction which are contained in Thy works and government. We need, Father of our spirits, a revelation of Thy will and the operation of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be savingly benefited by the light and the excellency of Nature and of Thy procedure in the regulation of all things.

Grant unto us, we earnestly beseech Thee for the sake of Thy Beloved Son, the Spirit of Thy grace. May He lead us into all truth, quicken, and sanctify us. We feel that we are vile, deserving of Thy wrath, and meet for eternal ruin. Oh! enter not into judgement with us. But for the sake of that Glorious Saviour, who came to call sinners to repentance and to rescue from perdition those that were ready to perish for ever, have mercy upon us, blot out the multitude of our sins. They have been innumerable and aggravated. We have sinned against light and goodness and love. We desire now unfeignedly to repent us of all our transgressions, and to turn unto the Lord.

And may our repentance be genuine and permanent. Let it not be transient, deceitful, and temporary like the disappointing cloud. Let it be that repentance which needeth not to be repented of, evidencing our having turned from all iniquity and sin unto the Lord. Holy Father, begin and carry on the good work of spiritual renovation in our souls even until the day of Christ Jesus, when He shall appear in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory to be honoured in His saints and admired in all them that believe. Bless us, God of all grace and mercy, this day in Him. This is the Day of the Lord. On it we would commemorate and triumph in His resurrection and victory over all His enemies. May we rise with Him, through His Spirit imparted to us, to newness of life.

Be with us as now assembled for Thy sacred worship and for the hearing of Thy Word. May our bark be to us Bethel, the house of God. May we and all, who are similarly engaged, be profited by the solemnities of Thy house and the preaching of the Gospel of Thy Son. Have compassion upon all mankind. Oh! look in pity upon those who care not for Thy Day or Thy Son or their own salvation and highest good. Turn them, O Lord, and they shall be turned. Especially would we commend to Thy most tender mercy and loving-kindness all those "that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters. These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep." Oh! may they be led to see the greatest of Thy works in the overcoming of sin through

the sacrifice of Christ and the rescuing of the sinner by the blood and righteousness of Immanuel. And, first of all, may they secure an interest in Jesus for themselves as their own Saviour. Enable us here present personally and individually to do so. And all the glory shall be Thine in the Blessed Redeemer. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing in Psalm 107, 23.

Let us read Ezekiel 27.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Psalm CVII. 23—32.

This Psalm is of a most comprehensive character. In the two preceding Psalms God's dealing with the Jewish Church and people is celebrated. Here the Psalmist passes beyond that boundary, and in the philanthropic spirit of the Gospel takes in 'the Redeemed of the Lord,' whom He had 'gathered out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.' All these are spoken of and addressed. Indeed the children of men universally are included in the subjects and exhortations of this admirable ode.

The Psalmist, having pointed out Divine Providence towards travellers in the wilderness, prisoners, and the afflicted, before proceeding to the revolutions that occur in families and nations, also introduces the experience and duty of mariners and those who travel by sea. While every part of this in-

comparable song is fraught with the instruction of Heavenly wisdom and fitted to attune every devout heart to spiritual melody, surely that part of it, which is now to occupy our attention, is not the least interesting and attractive. It should be so especially to all who are connected with 'the Sea.' And, while the sea-faring man and the sailor may feel that the paragraph concerns them more particularly, who is 'here among us, associated, as we are, with the great sea-girt isle, (to say nothing of Christian obligation to seamen)—who is there that should not feel a lively *personal* interest in the beautiful description and hortatory counsel of the inspired writer? Let us proceed to the story of it under the solemn influence of the concluding intimation of the Psalm, "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

First then we are called upon to notice the class of persons mentioned, "All that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters." In all probability David composed this Psalm; and, though the commerce and navigation of the Jews were greatly extended after his time, yet even then there must have been considerable intercourse between the people of Israel and strangers. Before that period the tribes of Dan and Asher appear to have had some maritime commerce with their neighbours. (See Judges 5, 17). By his wisdom and valour David acquired the two ports of Elath and Ezion-Geber on the Red Sea. He purchased large quantities of cedar-timber from Hiram, king of Tyre, with whom he carried on a large business, and with whom he uniformly maintained a friendly correspondence. From Hiram David also obtained workmen. It is estimated that he collected upwards of "eight hundred millions of our money" for the temple.* His son and successor, Solomon, was enabled by his wealth and talents greatly to enlarge the foreign trade of the kingdom. He carried on what in modern parassology would be called the timber business and lumbering to an unprecedented extent by means of the Tyrians in conjunction

* Dr. Arbuthnot's Calculations, Horne's Introduction, Vol. I., p. 488.

with his own subjects. Writing to Hiram, Solomon said, "I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil." (2 Chronicles 2, 1.) And again, "Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar-trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that I shall appoint: for thou knowest there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians." (1 Kings 5, 6). The Israelites then designated the Tyrians Sidonians from their having originally been a colony from Sidon. The king of Tyre entered cordially into the views of Solomon. He replied, "I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the Sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them." (1 Kings 5, 8, 9). Thus was the celebrated cedar-wood of Mount Lebanon brought to Joppa, a sea-port of Palestine on the Mediterranean, and thence to Jerusalem.

Solomon's business relations and friendship with 'the first commercial people in the Western World' stimulated him to pursue the benefits of navigation and trade. This greatly added to his wealth and fame. Besides his commercial intercourse with Egypt he conducted a most extensive plan of mercantile affairs by means of a vast fleet sailing from the Red Sea, probably going round the Cape of Good Hope and returning by the Mediterranean. We read that all king Solomon's vessels "were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom." (1 Kings 10, 21, 23.)

These observations may serve to show how the mind of the

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Psalmist would naturally select seamen as in a very striking manner instancing the Divine providential goodness. While we are never for a moment to forget that holy men of God wrote under the influence of the Spirit of holy inspiration, we do injustice both to the Divine Agent and to the workmanship of God in man's mental powers, if we fail to notice the peculiarities in the circumstances and intellectual physiology of the different writers of the Sacred Scriptures. How correctly and minutely familiar with the phases and routine of storms was the inspired penman of our text! For the picture, so true to the living reality, which he has drawn of a sea-storm, we cannot help rendering him the tribute of our admiration. And this the rather that "they, that go down to the sea in ships," of whom he primarily spoke, were not for the most part Jews, but foreigners. For, though some of the people of Israel would of course be led to follow the sea as their avocation from the trade and relations of their country, it was chiefly by means of the men of Tyre that its maritime affairs were conducted. The enlarged and liberal spirit of the holy poet, rejoicing perhaps in the spiritual benefits derived by the strangers from his countrymen, does with pious benevolence dwell upon topics in which they, "that do business in great waters," are all most solemnly interested.

Of such men our text declares, "These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep." Their business leads them to do so. In 'great waters,' where landsmen cannot help them save by their prayers, they are called upon to 'do business.' And, perilous as their engagements are, such persons have advantages of no ordinary character which, when improved, will cherish a lively and a profound sense of that Jehovah who originates and governs the grandeur of Creation and every thing that has life. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep." They do so especially when brought into contact with 'stormy wind fulfilling His word.' The Psalm before us not only supplies us with a most forcible and perspicuous drawing of a sea-storm; it farther leads us to the true and ultimate cause of such a terrific display. It leads us to Divine causation. It leads

us to God, to Him who 'rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm,' to the Lord who "hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet." To this Great First Cause we are immediately directed when we would with piety and profit survey the works of Nature and Nature's operations, "For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof."

Here is a lesson for seamen, a lesson of instruction, of reproof, of comfort. Let them remember that it is *Jehovah* who commandeth, and raiseth (or sustaineth) the stormy (or violently agitated) wind. How frequently, how habitually has this been forgotten! Could I address any large number of this interesting and vastly important class of men, might I not with truth and propriety say, How very many of you, my dear friends, have not only habitually and frequently, but *always* and without exception, failed to bear *piously* in mind that it is *the Lord* who "commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind," that it is He who lifteth up the waves of the deep,—He, "who hath gathered the wind in His fists, who hath bound the waters in a garment, who hath established all the ends of the earth." Familiar as you have been with the stormy wind, you feel awed when anticipating, witnessing, experiencing the dread onslaught of the tornado or of the more ordinary tempest. This is natural and becoming; it is honourable even in the courageous and weather-beaten sailor so to feel in such a position. But how few of you, beloved friends, when beholding and affected by the roar and ravages of the hurricane, the sudden attack of the imperilling squall, or the clamour of the elements in an equinoctial gale, when perchance the thunder's reverberations, the lightning's awful flashes, and the pelting rain combined to augment and aid the rage of the wind expending its tremendous energies as if just escaped from coercion or imprisonment,—oh! how few have considered that all was but the Almighty's instrumentality! Let me entreat you to learn even now, in the spirit of repentance and faith, adoring gratitude to the Preserver of your lives. Seek to join the man of God and say, "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: Fire and hail; snow and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling His Word."

And most particularly seek to know, see, and acknowledge God, not only in the majesty of His works and wonders of Creation and Providence, but in the majesty of His mercy and in the meekness of His Son, His unspeakable gift for the salvation of guilty and lost men. The mercy that is Divine you need. And, blessed be its Author, it is freely offered to you. Hear His own Gospel, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near : Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55, 6, 7). This mercy is the attribute in virtue of which sin is pardoned and the sinner justified, saved, and sanctified. It flows from the everlasting, spontaneous, unmerited love of God, from that love which originated and accomplished the plan of human salvation through the life and death, the doing and suffering of God's Only Son, the Saviour of sinners. "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." To this most gracious Ransomer from your thralldom of sin and Satan, and Restorer to holiness and God, I would most urgently, earnestly, intreatingly direct you, as your Only and All-sufficient Saviour. He was predicted by inspired prophets as "meek and having salvation." His own invitation is, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

After referring to the awe-inspiring "wonders of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep," seen by those "that go down to the sea in ships," the inspired Psalmist next proceeds with the happiest energy, vividness, and accuracy, to describe the influence of the dreadful tempest upon the seamen. "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths ; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." Every mariner will feel that the painting is true to

the life, and that that picture, which so forcibly presents to us the operation of winds and waves upon tempest-tossed sailors in the days of David, is equally correct and applicable to seafaring men in our own day. But let us mark now how such men, associated with the kingdom of the regal minstrel, were impressed with such a sense and in such circumstances. Shall we not express it? Yes, with them we say that in truth and justice we must declare our conviction that the Jewish and Tyrian mariners had profited more by their religious privileges and their knowledge of the God of Israel than our own mariners with the opportunities they could enjoy and the Christian ordinances of which they could take avail for the salvation and improvement of their souls. The Psalmist, speaking of the men of his time who were connected with his country, and who "went down to the sea in ships," relates it as characteristic of them, when brought "to their wit's end" by reason of the terrific storm which had suddenly conducted them to the brink of the grave, threatening every moment to plunge them in the depths of the watery abyss and to overwhelm them with destruction; of these men so situated, he says, "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble." That this was solemn, earnest, urgent, and believing prayer is evident, for it was answered by the Hearer of prayer. It was not the undevout, irreverent, mere instinctive cry of the human being in danger and awful distress. It was not the almost profane exclamation that in the hour of sorrow, or the moment of dreadest alarm, when even the most unreflecting will think and the most insensible feel, may escape from the lips. It was the energetic supplication of those who had no doubt that the True God, the God of Israel, could hear and help them. They knew that vain was all the power of man, and that their deliverance must come from Jehovah alone. Then, then they "cry aloud," (for such is the force of the original word) individually, unitedly, "unto the Lord in their trouble." With what happy success! How joyful and grateful the result! "Then they cry aloud unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that th-

waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet ; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.*

How attractively is the Divine goodness here presented to our contemplation ! Behold the love and beneficence of the Lord our God ! He is here revealed not simply as the Omnipotent Ruler of the winds and waves of the sea, but moreover and especially as the Answerer of prayer. His ear is ever open to the cry of the striving and humble suppliant. And how affecting is it to know that He will not turn away from the voice of our petition, though we may have forgotten Him or only provoked Him to anger in the day of prosperity, when no storm ruffled our Ocean, and we were sailing with our sails filled by favouring breezes. Indeed it is affliction that God often looks to as the instrument by which He will bring us to Himself. Speaking of His own backsliding Israel, He says, " In their affliction they will seek Me early." It was affliction that brought the heathen mariners of the ship of Tarshish, in which the fugitive prophet was a passenger, to know the Only True God, " the God of Heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land." It was affliction, in which they saw both the goodness and the severity of God, that led them to the worship and the consecration of themselves to the Jehovah of Israel. " Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows."† It was affliction that brought the disobedient Jonah to contrition, repentance, and prayer, when he was seeking to flee from the presence of the Lord. He acknowledgeth this himself unto the Lord his God, " When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord ; and my prayer came in unto Thee into Thine holy temple."‡ And affliction is one of the evidences of the paternal and gracious love of God to the Christian. " For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby."§

* See Jonah, Chap. 1.

† Jonah, Chap. 2.

‡ Hebrews 12.

May we not be improved by the devotion of seamen in affliction recorded in our text, and by the success of their prayer? "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses." Let me ask those whom now I address. Do you know any thing of such experience? Have you, when in calamity and peril, cried unto the Lord? Has He brought you out of your distresses? Do your preserved lives testify that in His merciful providence He saved you from death? Oh! reflect then upon the salutary and serious suggestions of the passage before you. Listen to the pious, affectionate and anxious utterance of the saintly writer of the Psalm before us. "Oh! that men (and it is seamen that he has particularly in view) would praise the Lord for His goodness (His exuberant or overflowing goodness), and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

Whether the inspired writer intends to intimate that the prayerfulness of those "that go down to the sea in ships" does very generally pass away with the terrific occasion on which "their soul is melted because of trouble", it is not necessary for us at present to discuss. That it would do so then, that it does so still, is undoubtedly true in most instances. The anxiety and crying earnestness of the mariner in peril of having for his last resting-place in this world the depths of Ocean and Ocean's billows to chant his funeral dirge, when he cries unto the Lord of the Ocean and of all the elements of nature, may be imposing and promising. But, alas! how frequently may our hopes be disappointed! How often may His goodness after all resemble the early cloud, which perchance held out the prospect of the genial rain, which, while it would refresh and fertilize the earth, might also be panted for by the ship's crew, whose supply of water was well-nigh exhausted. Did that morning cloud seem assuredly to foretoken rain? Alas! as the day advanced, the sun broke through and dispersed mist and cloud, and pelted upon the thirsty tar with his parching and burning rays. How similar this to the devoutness and profession of many who have been saved from shipwreck and from the deep by the Omnipotent and most Merciful Hearer of the cry

of distress. The mariner, who prayed and called aloud upon God when death was apparently nigh, forgets his Divine Benefactor and hardens his heart more than before and becomes ripe for ruin eternal.

Oh ! beware, men and brethren, of such conduct. And, that you may avoid such a fatal error, cherish, retain, call up, act upon your prayers and good resolutions offered and formed, it may be sincerely, under the influence of extraordinary danger and excitement. For this purpose consider, reflect. Fail not to be grateful to your Heavenly Preserver. How base is ingratitude ! And how base is ingratitude to Him who alone can preserve and deliver in the evil day, who often has interposed on your behalf, and who now looks to you for gratitude and the fruits of righteousness. Let me entreat every mariner,—acquaint thyself now with God and be at peace. For this purpose bear in mind that the mission of God's Son to this world for the salvation of guilty and perishing sinners is a work most glorious. It is also one in which every seaman and every sinner is most deeply interested. For, as we prize it, or slight it, it will elevate us to glory and eternal felicity or sink us into the gulf of endless perdition. Sailors "see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." But, sailors, let me beseech each of you to see by faith, by asking and obtaining the Spirit of God to quicken, instruct, enlighten, and sanctify you, the necessity of Jesus for you as a Saviour and His adaptation to all your necessity for time and for eternity. Rest not till you see the works of the Lord in the renovation of your own souls, in your becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus, in your acquaintance with the grandeur of redemption and the beauties of holiness. See these, seek to see them in yourselves first and then in your brother mariners and in all your brethren of mankind.

Such is the way to praise the Lord, to evince that the goodness of God has led you to repentance and that you have received the remission of sins. This is the aspiration for you of the holy Psalmist. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men !" (v. 31). And, while you, beloved friends,

do this in your closets, in your companionships, in your whole conduct, while you do it in secret when you are alone with God, in your families and with your kindred, fail not to honour, obey, and do homage to the Lord in His public ordinances, in the Christian assembly, in uniting with those who go to the House of God upon His Day, reverencing the Sanctuary and sanctifying the Sabbath. Never be ashamed of Jesus. Encourage the young and those who are in the way of obtaining good. Animate and delight the hoary-headed follower of the Lamb by your regular and faithful discharge of the duties and solemnities of the Temple of the Lord. "Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders," Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 42, 7.

Let us pray.

Most Merciful Lord God, grant for the sake of the Saviour of sinners that Thy Word and its solemn and beautiful lessons may be deeply interesting and instructive to us. Thou art the God of the ends of the earth. The sea is Thine. Thou causest the stormy tempest to arise, and Thou makest the storm a calm.

What time we are afflicted, teach us, Heavenly Father, to trust in Thee. We praise Thee on this Thy Hallowed Day for our preserved lives. Thou hast preserved us from danger, Thou hast delivered us from death. O! enable us to praise Thee for Thy goodness and for Thy wonderful works to the children of men.

Grant especially, Thou Fountain of life and salvation, that we may be savingly interested in Christ, Thy Beloved Son. Without a vital interest in Him we must perish eternally. Without pardon and regeneration we cannot enter Thy Kingdom of holiness and glory hereafter. May we be exercised with true repentance. May we experience the blessedness of the remission of all our sins. May we be united to Jesus in the everlasting Covenant of grace and love. May He be our Head, may we be His lively members. Blessed

be Thy Name, He is the Saviour of all sinners, of the seaman as well as of the landsman. Lord, may He be our Saviour.

May we be enabled to bring forth fruit unto God. May we evidence that we are the saved disciples of Jesus by doing His will. Whatsoever things are good and just and true, honourable, pious, benevolent, and of good report, may we think upon these things and be enabled to do them.

Be pleased to bless our country. She has long had much to do with the Sea. May the merchandize and riches of the Gentiles be in her case consecrated to Thy service and glory. Bless our Sovereign and her Royal Consort and all the members of their family. Set wise and godly men in the high places of the land. Bless the whole population with that righteousness which alone exalteth a nation. Bless us, Almighty God, and graciously accept of us, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 29, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

NINTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 23, 7.

Let us pray.

O Thou, who art at once the Hearer and the Giver of prayer, enable us, we beseech Thee, to draw nigh and worship Thee acceptably, with godly reverence, faith, and love. We come in the name of Jesus, whom Thou didst send to seek and to save that which was lost. In Him, adored be Thy name, we have one both able and willing to save to the uttermost all who come unto Thee through Him. With glory and grace that are Divine we hear Him saying, "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : for I am God, and there is none else."*

We bless Thee that Thou hast given this precious Saviour "for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles ;" and that Thou hast addressed unto us such words as these, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein ; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof."†

What shall we render to Thee, Almighty Father, for all Thy mercy, truth, and renovating goodness manifested to the children of men ? While we would praise Thee for all Thy goodness, we would above all praise Thee for Jesus Christ, Thine unspeakable gift. We would rejoice in the mission of the King of Zion. We would triumph in the sure word of prophecy concerning Him, that "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."‡

* Isaiah 45, 22.

† Isaiah 42, 40.

‡ Zechariah 9, 10.

We would mark with devout gratitude that our Blessed Redeemer early in His public ministry, and throughout it, showed marked attention to the "sea coast," to the countries bordering upon the Gentiles "by the way of the Sea;" and that he was pleased to select His Apostles from those whose calling was connected with the sea, from fishermen and boatmen. This, O Gracious and Heavenly Parent, is encouraging to poor, humble seamen, such as we are.

We praise and thank Thee, Thou God of all goodness, for Thy saving goodness towards mariners. Thy Holy Word not only shows us that they are far from being overlooked, or considered unimportant as a class. The notice there taken of them is both instructive and encouraging. We have in Thee an illustration of the perfection of Thy Word. And especially do we with gratitude remember this day that Thy Word of Truth records the duty of seamen and its discharge under the effectual operation of Thy quickening and sanctifying Spirit, of praising Thee, and believing to the saving of the soul.* Oh! grant, Thou God of salvation, that we may be followers of those who, when called upon to follow Jesus, at once obeyed the sacred command. May we hear Him requiring each of us to follow Him. Without delay may we deny self, crucify the flesh, take up our cross, and, as the genuine Disciples of Thy Son, be holy as Thou art holy. And to Thy Great Name in Christ shall be all the glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 89, 25.

Read John Chap. 1.

* Psalm 107, and Jonah 1.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Matthew IV. 12—22.

We have already seen that in the inspired writings of the Old Testament seamen, as a class of human beings needing salvation, are far from being overlooked. On the contrary, we know that "mariners," "they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters," are introduced and noticed in the Book of God before the coming of Messiah. And we shall find that during the personal Ministry of Christ, and subsequently, they are also kept in view. Though He Himself was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet His course plainly evinces that He never forgot the prophecy concerning Him, "He shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles." In like manner may we observe many incidents that evince a kindly and a gracious regard to sea-faring men. The verses now to engage our attention are an interesting indication of the favour of Immanuel both to the Gentiles and to seamen.

Though our Lord did not begin His public Ministry at this period and in the neighbourhood specified, He appears to have entered from this time more fully upon those solemn duties which He came to discharge. The occurrences narrated in the four first chapters of John's Gospel, as also several other, happened before this time. But the imprisonment of His forerunner the Redeemer regarded as an impressive intimation of what He must do. He knew that He must work the work of Him that sent Him while it was day. That work was vast and unspeakably momentous. His day was also limited, so that ceaseless and vigilant activity and devotedness were requisite to accomplish the work given Him to do. Hence we hear Him a little before this era telling His disciples, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work. Say not ye, there are four months, and then cometh harvest? behold I say unto you, lift up your

eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”*

When the Baptist was imprisoned, Jesus immediately left Judea for Galilee. “Now, when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee; And, leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim.”

Many reasons induced the Great Teacher sent from God to prefer spending the greater part of His time in Galilee than in Judea. He was far freer in the former province from the malignant influence of the bigoted and hostile Scribes and Pharisees, and of the Priests and Elders of Jerusalem, than He would have been in the latter. The population of Galilee was dense and had been much neglected. Many strangers, foreigners, and heathens visited it for purposes of commerce and business. Though the people were loose and ignorant, they were not so prejudiced and self-righteous as the inhabitants of Judea. Christ intended also to select His Apostles chiefly from among them. And, while the hardness and general habits of the men so chosen were fitted to be of use to them as “fishers of men,” disciplined by their Divine Master, their boats and skill as boatmen and sailors would be of great importance to Jesus in travelling from place to place, especially when we bear in mind that “the Son of man” was poor in the possessions and wealth of this world.

We are told of Christ’s leaving Nazareth. In the fourth of St. Luke there is an affecting account of the manner in which the people of Nazareth rejected the Only Saviour and were offended in Him. And why? Because they had known Him from His infancy, and He had been brought up among them. He told them the cause why they in particular would not have Him to save, instruct, and rule over them. “No prophet is accepted in his own country.” The curious principle thus referred to as operating in human nature, leading men to prefer and honour strangers rather than those with whom or with whose personal history they are familiar, has been often

* John 4, 34, 35.

experienced. It is a pernicious and soul-destroying one. It is of the essence of the carnal mind which is enmity against God. Pride and self-complacency so influence people that they will not be reprov'd for their faults and sins, or have their darkness enlightened through the instrumentality of an individual who knows them better than a stranger can know them.

We thus see that pride is one great cause of this rejection of a fellow-countryman, especially if he be humble in birth or connections; for, if there be worldly grandeur and superiority, the case may be different. The love of novelty also sways the minds of many. If the "prophet" or minister of Christ (for the principle operates as powerfully now as in the days of our Saviour or before His coming) should rise to great eminence, his fellow-townsmen may then acknowledge and seek to do homage to him, or after his death they may erect a monument to his memory, just as the Jewish people built the tombs and garnished the sepulchres of prophets whom their fathers had murdered. But, generally speaking, it may require a life-time ere one in a position analogous to "a prophet in his own country" shall be dealt with justly by his brethren. The better way probably for such a one is to imitate the example of His Master and leave Nazareth. Yet let him take heed of pride and carnality in himself when he comes to such a determination.

How unhappy was the condition of Nazareth after being left by Jesus! She knew not, at least in her day, the things that belonged to her peace, and now they are for ever hid from her eyes! How dreadful is the state of a place or person left—given over by Jesus! To such "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."* Let us for ourselves guard against such a deplorable result by never trifling with the convictions of conscience, by reverently listening to the Word of God, by receiving the Truth in the love of it, by cordially accepting of Christ as He is offered to us in the Gospel, by never griev-

* Hebrews 10, 26-27.

ing or resisting His Holy Spirit in our souls, by increasing in genuine humility, self-denial, and spirituality, by striving to be single-minded and strong in faith, glorifying God in all things.

From the time of Christ's relinquishment of Nazareth Capernaum was the highly favoured spot which He made His principal residence. Besides reasons connected with the locality His feelings of love and friendship as a man may have weighed with 'the Son of man' in His choice. We can easily understand why Bethany formed the favourite retreat of Jesus when Jerusalem was the theatre of His ministrations. It was "the family of Bethany" that, humanly speaking, made Bethany so attractive to the Saviour. His esteem and affection for its members are expressed with great simplicity and emphasis by the disciple whom He loved. "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus."* In like manner, when we bear in mind that Jesus was perfectly aware of the presence of the excellent Centurion, whose character as a believer surpassed that of any of the seed of Abraham, and of that of the affectionate and upright nobleman and his family, who were gratefully and from enlightened conviction attached to their best Benefactor; when we also remember that the home and family of the warm-hearted Peter were there, and that their Lord intended to sojourn with them,—we see what strong inducements there were to make this selection which would render Capernaum "exalted to Heaven" by its privileges. This choice does not encourage us to consult rather our private gratification than our public duty; but it teaches us that by means of the cheering, enlivening, hallowing influences of pious and congenial domestic society the spirit and mind of men are nerved and animated by the Divine blessing for the performance of the most difficult services in the Church or the world, and for the meek and patient endurance of all the sufferings allotted to us in the providence or will of God. How much the soul of the Blessed Redeemer counted in this respect upon closest, tenderest, dearest, holiest friendship, may be seen in His desire

* John 11, 5.

for the fellowship of His three favoured Disciples from among the little faithful fraternity of the eleven. We read that, when the hour of His direst endurance was at hand, "They came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He saith to His disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here and watch."*

Capernaum is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It is supposed to have been one of the towns built by the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity. It bordered upon the lots of Zebulun and Naphtali, which seem to have lain nearly at right angles to each other. They were both situated "beyond Jordan." This does not mean East of Jordan, or on the other side of Jordan, as was the inheritance of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. It may signify beyond where the Jordan entered the Lake of Galilee. This district in common with the whole of "Upper Galilee" was styled, from the intercourse it had with the neighbouring nations and the presence of many resident strangers, "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Both the position and the populousness of Galilee in the time of Solomon may be inferred from that monarch's giving to Hiram, King of Tyre, twenty cities in that province. And doubtless both its relative position and its teeming population of Jews and Gentiles weighed with the Saviour of mankind in bestowing so much attention on it.

How admirably was the prediction of the dying patriarch fulfilled, "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon."† In "the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death:"—amidst the most sublime and inspired legacies of the saint's majestic pen the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar are associated together. The lot of Issachar was next to that of

* Mark 14, 32.

† Genesis 49, 12.

Zebulun on the south as was that of Naphtali on the north ! " Rejoice Zebulun in thy going out, and Issachar in thy tents. They shall call the people unto the mountain, there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: For they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand."* " Meaning that those two tribes should come together to the temple of Jerusalem, to the holy mountain, and should bring with them such of the tribes as dwelt in their way; and that, being situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, they should apply themselves to trade and navigation, and to the melting of metals and glass, denoted by those words, 'Treasures hid in the sand.'" (Robinson, Zebulun, also Judges 5, 17).

Such were the country and the people now to be most highly favoured by the preaching and saving influence of the Great Teacher sent from God—" And, leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the Sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." The style of imagery here employed is peculiarly bold, expressive, and beautiful. It is a style not unusual in the Word of God.† Darkness and the region and shadow of death, and dwelling or sitting in such a state, when spoken in reference to the spiritual and moral condition of a community, represents their degenerated character and circumstances. They are contented to live without God and without hope in the world. They love what is sinful and dislike what is holy. They prefer the darkness of religious ignorance, and the repose of spiritual death to light and Divine life in the soul. Such a people are drawing nigh to everlasting death. The sword of eternal vengeance is suspended over their head. They are liable every moment, as ripe for de-

* Deuteronomy 33, 18, 19.

† See Job 10, 21; 16, 16; 34, 22; Jeremiah 2, 6.

struction, to have everlasting wrath entailed upon them. They are nigh unto that death from which there is no possible resurrection. They are already by their guilt so fitting subjects for "the second death" that they are presented to us as in its region sitting and having its most direful shade lengthening over them. How glorious are the "glad tidings" which by the Ransomer of enslaved man and by His servants are proclaimed even to such,—to every such one—"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Such was the result upon not a few of the obscure, remote, and careless Galileans. "The people, which sat in darkness, saw great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."

Let all, who are in a similar position with this people by their unrighteousness, hasten to obey the gracious call, lest, like Nazareth, they be left, left for ever, left in hardness of heart and impenitency of mind to perish eternally. Let them rather strive to be the living exemplification of compliance with the enraptured mandate of the thrilling prophet, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands."^a

And let the Minister of the Gospel, who would walk in the footsteps of his Divine Master, mark the grand topic upon which not only the forerunner of Messiah, but Messiah Himself insisted, especially in the commencement of His Ministry with any of His hearers. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Sinners in the day of Christ upon earth, who would become citizens and subjects of the king of Zion, must repent. All needed true repentance, a godly grieving for their sins and turning from them unto God. They that re-

^a Isaiah 42, 10.

fixed to admit their need of such repentance, who were good enough or righteous in their own estimation, Christ came not to call. It was sinners, those who felt and owned their guilt and the need of Divine renovation. The plan of salvation is the same still. It admits of no change. Repentance toward God together with the contemporaneous grace of the Spirit of God, faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are the doctrines which, preached with simplicity and godly sincerity, are rendered effectual to salvation by God's quickening and sanctifying Spirit.

We have next an interesting and instructive account of the calling of four of the future Apostles. "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the Sea; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him." Perhaps Jesus was walking along the shore of the grand and beautiful Lake, whose placid serenity and stillness were highly favourable for both meditation and observation, that he might indulge in these exercises of the human mind. Soon he discovered two individuals following their honest and honourable avocation, in whom he probably recognized two former disciples of John. He had Himself been pointed out to at least one of them by the Baptist, and they were both personally acquainted with Christ.* They were enjoined to quit their present occupation, and told that they would be advanced to a higher and more responsible calling. With loving hearts and ready minds they without demur instantly obeyed. How salutary the contemplation of this simple and entire consecration to Jesus! How sublime the picture of surrender and obedience to the will of Him in whom they believed as "the Lamb of God!" Even their habits as fishermen, and their circumstances generally, were favourable to their becoming efficient heralds of the Cross. They had already in some measure learned to watch and wait, to be patient, hardy and persevering, to sacrifice convenience and comfort to duty. They had no

* See John 1, 35, &c.

landed estates, no commercial transactions, no professional engagements to detain them. They were freemen, intelligent, pious, shrewd, respectable men. And where will the children of vanity or the ambitious worldling find a more estimable or suitable class of men from which the Captain of Salvation could have selected "fishers of men?"

We have next an account of the calling of other two of the Apostles from the same order of persons, "And, going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him." It is here worthy of remark that, though from the narrative and the parallel passage in the 1st of Mark, where "hired servants" are spoken of, James and John were in more affluent circumstances than Peter and Andrew, they were found in the humble employment of "mending their nets," an incident the very mention of which by the Evangelist both evinces the genuineness of the history, and suggests many useful hints about economy and care. As regards leaving their father on the part of the sons of Zebedee, it is highly probable that Zebedee also was a disciple and believer in Jesus. It is therefore likely that, besides their being men of mature years, and so entitled to judge for themselves, Zebedee cordially consented to his sons following the Saviour in personal attendance, and fully approved of their conduct.

The loving attachment and obedience evinced by some of Christ's first Disciples to their adorable Master is most refreshing and worthy of all imitation. In the 5th of Mark we read of the fiercest and most wretched of maniacs, whom Satan and his legion constantly incited to self-destruction, but without success. This "man with an unclean spirit" had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no not with chains; Because that he had been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. But, when he saw Jesus afar off, he

ran and worshipped Him." The issue was such that immediately afterwards his neighbours saw him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." We are told that this most affectionate, grateful, and now happy man came to his Divine Benefactor, and prayed that he might be with Him. "Howbeit Jesus suffered him not; but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." How delighted would that disciple have been to have rendered constant attendance upon his Heavenly Saviour, yet how docile and devoted to His will. When in the exercise of His supremacy and wisdom, for the extension of His kingdom, the glory of His Father, and the good of souls, He was pleased to decide in a manner different from the warm wishes of a heart overflowing with burning love, did not this genuine child of God at once and cheerfully acquiesce? He did. "And he departed and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel." So also again, when the honour of God and the best interests of men required that the sons of Zebedee should quit the paternal home and society, and, without any snapping asunder or disregard of the bonds of natural obligation and affection, these were simply required as secondary; and the first and highest duty of love and obedience to God was obeyed, as of most primary importance. James and John were young men, and youth, it has been said, is "the learning age and the labouring age." From thirty to fifty was the age during which the most special and solemn duties of the Levitical priesthood and ministry were to be performed. And certainly this period of life should form the principal of the Gospel minister's service.

"Fishers of men" under the New Testament economy may form both a parallelism and a progression as compared with the shepherds of the fold under the preparatory Dispensation, although the latter term is appropriated also to Christianity. Not only does the Christian economy provide for the discharge of the peaceful and quiet duties of the pastoral office in the diligent oversight of what already constitutes the flock of the Chief Shepherd, it also requires that the obligations of

"fishers of men" shall be felt and responded to by the elders of the Church and all the followers of Christ. The commission of "fishers of men," it will be seen, is more enlarged and much more extensive than that of the Mosaic Priest, Teacher, or Levite, whose fold was the people of Israel. This latter takes in not only "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," but all sinners of all nations; it comprehends "All the ends of the earth, and them that are afar off upon the sea." It is identical with that charge addressed by the risen Redeemer to "the eleven" in respect to discipling all nations. It is in perfect keeping and harmonizes most admirably with the concluding Gospel call, sounded by the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning-star when closing the Volume of Inspiration. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

While the weighty and awful responsibilities of those, who are called to the work pertaining to "fishers of men," should incite the successors of the first ministers of Christ to increasing devotion and diligence in the performance of their solemn duties, let me entreat the hearers of the Gospel to ponder—ponder its influence upon them and their accountableness. This Gospel will save and elevate every one, to whom it comes, to eternal blessedness; or it will sink you in confirmed impenitency to the pit of perdition. It will most infallibly be the savour of life unto each of us, or the savour of death unto death. It sets death and life before us and says, Choose ye this day which of two results will be yours. To the sinner, who takes hold of Jesus to be saved from sin, its language is, "Peace be to thee." To the covetous, the cold, the carnally-minded worldling its faithful warning is, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha." For "the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind. Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, and cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the

furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

Let us sing Paraphrase 23, 12.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, grant, we beseech Thee, for the sake of Thy Blessed Son, that the hearing of Thy Most Holy Word may be accompanied with Thy effectual blessing to our souls. May we not only be hearers of Thy Word, may we also be doers of what it enjoins.

We praise Thee, O Thou Merciful Saviour, who didst cause the people that sat in darkness to see great light, for the institution of a Gospel Ministry. It hath pleased Thee "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." We bless Thy name that Thou didst call from their previous avocations suitable men, and didst set them apart to be "fishers of men." For whatever success they enjoyed in the discharge of the duties of their sacred calling, and for whatever success has attended the Ministry of those who have entered into their labours, we desire unfeignedly and most heartily to render thanks unto Thee. And, oh ! may we be among the number of those who are effectually called, savingly enclosed and caught for life eternal in the Gospel net.

What shall we render to Thee, O Lord, for all our Christian privileges ! Not only have we Thy Holy Oracles which we can read, and Thine ear ever open to the prayer of the contrite at the Throne of grace, and the blood of Christ to cleanse us from all sin, and the Spirit of holiness to quicken and to sanctify us ; we have also the precious advantage of social worship, and especially of the exercises of Zion, to stimulate us and to render all other means of grace and spiritual improvement more profitable to us. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound ; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day : and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted." May we thus savingly know the glad tidings. May we individually know the Gospel as the Gospel of Sal-

* Matthew 13, 47.

vation. May ours be the blessedness of the man whose sin is covered, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

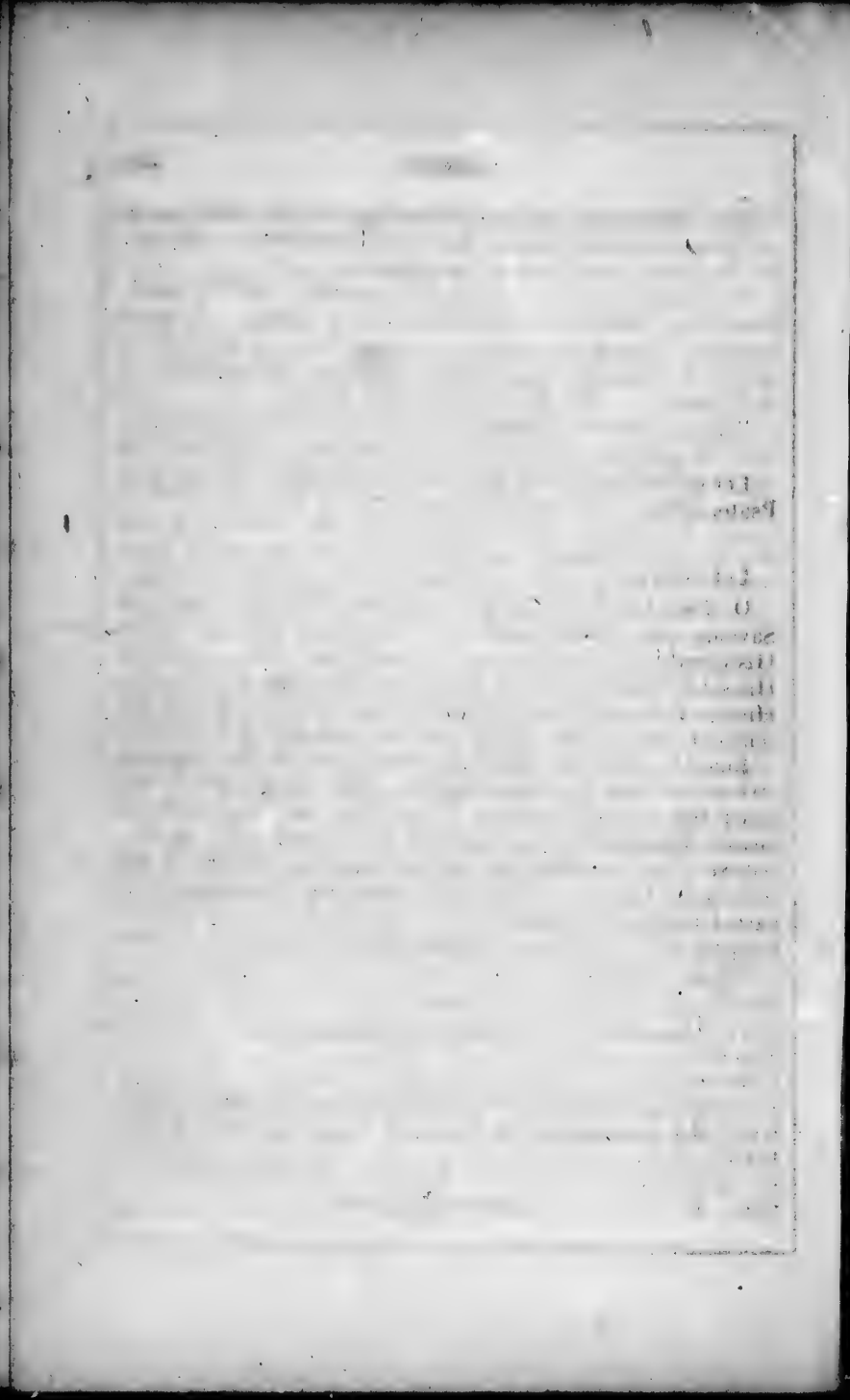
We praise Thee, Thou God of the mariner, for Thy goodness to us while upon the sea, and doing business in great waters. Dispose and enable us to exalt Thee in the congregation of the people, and to praise Thee in the assembly of the elders.

Bless, all who like ourselves go down to the sea in ships, and all who are connected with the sea. May they be partakers of the Great Redemption wrought out by Thy Son. Bless all Thy people everywhere with increase of grace and peace. Bless all our brethren of mankind with the light of Christianity and its happy consequences. Bless our own loved country, our Sovereign the Queen, her Majesty's Royal Consort, the children whom Thou hast entrusted to them, and all the members of the Royal Family. Bless with heavenly wisdom and prudence our Rulers, and the people with that godliness which has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Bless our captain, officers, and all the ship's crew in temporal and spiritual things. Comfort the afflicted. Protect and be Thou the confidence of those who are exposed to danger and death. Prepare the dying for eternity. Be Thou our God and our guide while we live, our trust and consolation when the hour of our departure shall have arrived, and our everlasting portion when time to us shall have terminated. Our prayers and thanksgiving we present in the name of Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory everlasting. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 56, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all." Amen.

* Psalm 89, 15 : 32, 1.



TENTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Psalm 8, 3.

Let us pray.

O Thou, who art the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we would now draw nigh unto Thee in His name. We humbly hope and earnestly entreat that for His sake Thou wouldst be merciful and gracious to us. May His Spirit effectually draw us to Him, and in Him give us spiritual quickening.

Enable us, Thou God of everlasting love, to prize Thy love to us as manifested in the Mission and Work of Thy Beloved Son. May we have Thy love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. We desire now to receive "the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby." Oh! how precious is Thy grace and truth imparted to men by Christ Jesus. Make us, Good Lord, the subjects of Thy grace and lovers of Thy truth.

We rejoice to know, Almighty and most Merciful Father, that, though the Saviour came to His own and His own received Him not, there were not wanting a goodly company who did receive Him, and that to them He gave power to become the sons of God by faith. We praise Thee that there were not wanting instances where, during His public ministry, "the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God." They felt that He spoke that Word with power, and not as the Scribes. May there be in us a similar disposition. Blessed be Thy most Holy Name, if there be in us

such a heart. It is of Thy grace, it is from Thee, and the Great Teacher, sent from God, will in His Divine Providence cause us to be taught Thy Holy Will.

We recur this day with lively gratitude and delight to such instances of the goodness and love of Christ as His "teaching the people out of the ship." May we in our ship be savingly taught by Him. And may we not only desire to hear, but may we be enabled to do Thy will. May Jesus be unspeakably valued by us. When He speaks, may we be ever ready to hear; when He commands, may we account it our obligation, honour, and happiness to obey.

Bless, we beseech Thee, Thou sovereign Author of Salvation, the labours of Thy servants in the ministry of the glorious Gospel. Though, as "fishers of men," they may seem to have toiled long and taken nothing, may they not faint or be utterly discouraged. At the word of Christ may they again let down the net. And may this now have this day free course and be glorified. May a vast multitude be enclosed in the Gospel net, who shall eternally be to the praise of Thy Divine power and love.

Be with us, Holy Father, in our present exercises. Give us grace to be truly devout and to strive earnestly that we may be now the followers of the Lamb and hereafter among the number of those who shall, when the tempests and trials of the voyage of life are ended, have reached the haven of eternal rest and blessedness. Mercifully hear and accept of us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 42, 7.

Read Isaiah 42.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Luke V., 1—XII. of Matthew.

In the 4th Chapter, we have an account of the call of Peter and Andrew, James and John to the Gospel Ministry.

The incidents here narrated are believed by some to have occurred on that occasion.

The verses of the text may in that case be viewed as furnishing some additional and very instructive particulars.

But it appears much more likely that the whole of the transactions now before us took place at another and an after time. In the former relation, it seems that Christ was alone, walking meditatively along the shore of the tranquil Lake. While enjoying the influence of its calm and unruffled waters and that of the surrounding scenery, He fell in with the four future Apostles. There is something extremely beautiful and suitable as well as grand and awful in the circumstances. We behold the Creator of the Universe in the person of the Man Christ Jesus, calling, as it were, to His aid the solemnizing and soothing influences of the still and silent Sea, previously to His advancing to address the mandate which constituted four of the fishermen of Galilee—"fishers of men." What a well-spring of devout and profitable reflection is here presented to the contemplative Christian! "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the Sea; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And, going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left their ship and their father, and followed Him."*

In all this there does not appear to have been any other

parties present from first to last than those noticed.' But in the narrative of St. Luke we first behold a vast multitude of persons anxiously striving to be permitted to listen to the Divine truths which the Great "Teacher sent from God" was disposed to utter. It is this preceding incident, and our Lord's improvement of it, that form the introduction to the story of Peter and his friends. "And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret." The sea-side, so far now from being to Jesus the place of solitude, has become the place of public resort, to which thronging, eager, solemnized, anxious multitudes. Nor is it that they may witness and participate in the pleasures of the haunts of dissipation and dishonesty that these earnest and striving visitors have come. It is not even the lawful and laudable pursuit of honest gain that has drawn them thither. Interests of far higher importance engage their attention. Nobler aims than any that are bounded by the present world or the present life, stimulate, we may hope, this motley crowd of human beings that have gathered round the Saviour and the friend of man.

What an interesting assembly we here behold of life's voyagers, launched upon the sea of time and sailing with rapidity to the shores of eternity to their destination in the world to come. Among them may be seen the devout inhabitant of Judea, who has left for a season his own home, attracted by the fame and the character of Jesus. He feels dissatisfied with the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees, and intensely longs for light and peace, for a discovery of the vital doctrines of Revelation in their saving power, for a sense of pardon and reconciliation with God, that His love may be shed abroad in his heart, and that he may become holy as His Father in Heaven is holy. There may we observe the more uninstructed and less strict Galilean who is deeply persuaded of his own ignorance and guilt. He most sincerely desires that he may be taught in the way that leads to life eternal. His prayer is that all old things which are evil may pass away, and that all things may become new with him. He is deeply conscious that one thing, to be right with God, is needful for him. And that one thing, we may hope, is now his single

and all-engrossing aim. There likewise stands the stranger—the man of trade—the Gentile. He may be a Sidonian, or he may belong to the “daughters of Sidon”—its colony Tyre, or he may have come from some more distant part of the world. Observe even he is drawn by the rumours respecting Him who speaks as never man spake, and whose power is only equalled by His benevolence. He too is becoming alive to reflection, his conscience convicts him of innumerable sins that he has committed, and he feels that he needs the compassion and favour of the God that is Above, the God of Israel, the Only Living and True God, for he is constrained to admit that the gods of the nations are vanity and a lie. His grand enquiry now is to Jehovah, “What wouldest Thou have me to do? What must I do to be saved?” And there also is the hardy, fearless, weather-beaten seaman. How does he happen to mingle with this curious, yet awe-struck throng? Is he storm-staid? Or has he just arrived upon the shores of the Holy Land, and, having experienced the preserving goodness of the Lord amidst the tempestuous billows of “deep calling unto deep,” is he now seeking to obey the sacred mandate addressed to those that go down to the sea in ships, when brought to their desired haven? Is he now desirous of “praising the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men, of exalting Him also in the congregation of the people, of praising Him in the assembly of the elders?” We know not what are his particular circumstances, whence he is or whither he is bound. But we rejoice in his attendance. It may be that, while traversing the great and wide sea, he has frequently sought to study “the Holy Scriptures,” the chart by which he must steer in order to reach the port of Salvation and endless joy. Especially upon the Sabbath-day, when, it may be, the privilege or the right has been enjoyed by him of cessation from all toil save what necessity or the Providence of God may demand of him, after preparatory cleaning and putting on of Sabbath attire, he has betaken himself to the quiet, retired, devotional reading and searching of the Oracles of God. How he may have been humbled, reprov'd, corrected and taught by the life-giving Word! Yet

how he has sought and prayed for some man to teach him ! His request will be met. And now on the favoured shore of the land given by God to Abraham and his seed, he hears of the Son of David, who was the promoter of commerce and the father of Solomon, the greatest commercial man that ever lived. But who, we may ask, is this Son of David, this mighty Root and Offspring of Israel's monarch ? It is the Anointed One of whom the prophet speaks. " He shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench. He shall bring forth judgement unto Truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgement in the earth : and the isles shall wait for His law."*

Such, we may suppose, were some of the individuals that composed the interesting congregation mentioned by the historian. Classes of such were probably present. The publican, the peaceful rustic, the fisherman and the agriculturist, the man of war, the profligate ; the reputable and the questionable ; the spiritually minded and the worldling ; the man of strictness and the negligent ; the drunkard and the man of sobriety ; the upright and the dishonest ; the man of sordid selfishness and the generous benefactor ; the miserly and the covetous ; the liberal and those who loved God ; the misanthropist and the philanthropic ; the youth educated in the strictest sect of Judaism and the grey-haired devotee of licentiousness, who had long cared for none of these things ; the high, the middling and the low ; the landsman and the mariner ; the Jew, the proselyte, and the uncircumcised Gentile ; the old, the middle-aged and the young ; the prosperous, the man who, though standing, found it difficult to bear up against the buffeting and the blast of untoward events, and the ruined ; the strong and hale ; the delicate and the dying ; the energetic and the indolent ; the partisan and the leader ; the man of vigorous and independent mind, and he who could scarce think for himself,—all these, and many more, presented themselves before the Redeemer of Israel, the Restorer of man-

* Isaiah 42, 1-4.

kind ; and evinced the utmost anxiety to listen to the spirit-awakening and the spirit-stirring truths which they knew this Master in Israel could teach them. How animating the scene !

What thoughts and meditations may it awaken in the meditative and devout mind ! And, O ! how affecting to the soul of the Son of Man, whose reward, to which He looks, is the bringing of many sons and daughters to glory ! to Him who had come in the name of the Lord to save sinners, to call them to repentance, to preach the remission of sins and sanctification to the contrite and believing ! Here were there many immortal beings. All on a week-day had laid aside their wonted employments, and so intent were they upon hearing that they would take no denial ; they were almost disorderly in their haste and eagerness to listen to the Word of God from the lips of His Son. For be it observed, it is expressly stated, that it was " to hear the Word of God," that the people " pressed" upon the preacher. How thrilling the spectacle ! How gladsome, yet how solemnizing, to witness such a mighty mass of immortal beings sailing upon time's troubled sea, rapidly hastening to the land of their eternal destiny !

Who will refuse to be delighted with the sight ? Who does not expect that the blessed Jesus will most cordially respond to their cry for " the bread of life ?" Who is not confident that He will not disappoint them, but will show them that He is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him ?

" And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God, He stood by the Lake Genesaret, and saw two ships standing by the Lake ; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship."*

Who can imagine the untold results of that hallowed occasion ! The time of day appears to have been the morning,

* Luke 1, 3.

a most suitable season for religious exercises. Christ's hearers in the vigour of refreshed nature devoted the best part of the day, before they had been disturbed with the pressure and cares of secular business, to the things that belong to their everlasting peace. What encouragement they received from Jesus! He at once sought to gratify their good inclination and desire. He went on board of the boat of Peter "and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land." This shows how pleasing in the sight of God is the disposition to be taught the things of His kingdom. Christ will now providentially and by His Spirit foster every aspiration after Himself and salvation. He did so personally in the days of His ministry upon earth. He does so still by the agency and indwelling of that purchased Divine Spirit. He begins and carries on to maturity the good work of sanctification in the soul of man.

Do we wonder at the gracious words that proceed out of the mouth of Jesus? We must also wonder at the gracious manner in which He deals with poor sinners ready to perish. Mark how He condescended to solicit, to pray Peter for his boat that He might occupy it a little for the spiritual benefit of the people who had come to Him. Nor was the willing disciple any other than most hearty in seconding the views of his Divine Master. He at once cast off from his moorings or thrust out his vessel to the distance from the shore which would suit his Lord and the congregated people on the beach. Being thus removed "a little" from the shore, the Heavenly Saviour assumed the posture then usual for a religious Instructor, "He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship."

What "the Word of God" was, which our Lord on that occasion preached, we can easily understand from what is recorded of His discourses at other times. And His word would be with power. He would teach the listening company as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. He would make them aware of the nature of the deadly spiritual malady of which they were the subjects, and direct them to the true Remedy in the cleansing of their souls from sin and their walking in newness of life. He would counsel them to

set their affections on the things of God, and cease from worldly ambition. He would inculcate docility, love to God, and proper affection to their neighbour.

Among the congregated hearers none were more attentive than the future Apostles who were in attendance. Peter especially seems to have been moved and affected. He had most cheerfully complied with the request of Jesus in respect to his ship, and, though he may have been fatigued or depressed with the labours of a night spent in fruitless exertion, he forgot all impediments in a moment at the word of Christ and became a most deeply attentive and pondering hearer. And doubtless he heard with great profit. The word of God was to him "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

God never, even in worldly things and the present life, allows any to serve Him for nought. "There is no man that hath left house or parents, brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."† Not only in the keeping of the Divine Commandments is there "a great reward" in the internal peace, joy, and purity which this induces; there is a natural, gracious, and a Providential tendency in such a course of conduct to lead to temporal prosperity. Such is the ordination of Him who is the Sovereign Ruler and Lawgiver in Nature, in Grace, and in Providence.

In accordance with this wise provision was the address of Jesus to His attached friend and hearer, Peter, immediately on the conclusion of the sacred exercises in which they had been engaged, being probably the oldest and the principal man of the piscatory company, the revered Master spoke through him to both boats' crews, "Now, when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." How beautiful, how docile, how

* Hebrews 4, 12.

† Luke 18, 29, 30.

respectful, how obedient was the reply of the good fisherman! He well knew the habits of the fish that frequented the Galilean Lake, and that night was the appropriate time for a successful catch. He and his co-partners had been disappointed. The whole of the preceding night they had laboured and waited in vain, for they had caught no fish. The night may have been stormy, the water of the Lake may have "cast up mire and dirt," and the rain of heaven may have drenched these weary and worn-out men of the sea. We read that, when Jesus in the morning saw the "two ships standing by the Lake, the fishermen were gone out of them and were washing their nets." The storm had subsided into the calm, and they, though foiled for the present, gave way neither to recklessness nor despondency. They practised that becoming care and cleanliness which may well be said to stand next in order to godliness. They would not quit or take repose until they had properly cleansed and adjusted their fishing-tackle. It was then that they were invited to join the multitude who resorted to Jesus on the shore "to hear the Word of God." Ready, as we may well believe, these worthy men were for rest and sleep, they hesitated not a moment, but with one consent became an attentive and a devout part of the interesting auditory of the wonderful Preacher. Shall we not then admire the answer of their spokesman? Shall it not furnish us with many a salutary suggestion in the conduct that in life we ought to pursue? Does it not breathe the very spirit we should imbibe, and supply an example most worthy of our imitation? Hear it, "And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net."

The result of this submission and compliance was a miraculous draught of fishes. The humble followers of Immanuel lost nothing by their piety and devotion, their prayerful and intelligent waiting upon Him. Had they been "wise in their own conceit," or possessed by the spirit of the worldling, they might have concluded that it was unreasonable, absurd, ridiculous to ask men, situated as they then were, to attend Religious Ordinances or to mingle in public worship. But

they were actuated by a disposition the opposite of all this. While it is evident that they were not "slothful in business," is it not equally manifest that they were "servent in spirit, serving the Lord." No one for a moment will suspect them of indolence, or of making their attendance upon the preaching of Christ a plea for its indulgence. But they had a disposition and a relish for Divine things. They were willing to seek first the kingdom of God, believing that all needful earthly good would be granted them. And that ever bountiful Lord, whom they served, failed not even at once to reward them. Simon and his companions without hesitation or demur let down the net in deference to the mandate of Him whom they called Master. "And, when they had done this, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake," or was rent.

While this is fraught with instruction to all men and all Christians, it is so most especially to those whose business it is to minister in holy things, to watch for souls as they that must give account. Who will not admit that the qualities, here displayed by these fishermen of Galilee, were eminently fitted to qualify them for their subsequent high and sacred calling? Observe the activity, industry, patience, assiduity, perseverance, fortitude, self-denial, trust in God, and holy simplicity which characterized them. Who does not perceive what suitable preparatives these were, and what an excellent training they indicated for the "fishers of men?" The ministers of God should approve themselves "in much patience, in labours, in watchings, in fastings," as well as in many other ways. "But thou, O man of God," says the Apostle to Timothy, "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."* Let the servant of Christ, who may have been visited with a long and dark night, console himself with the assurance that "the day cometh." And in the morning he may see Jesus, yea, though he may have toiled all the night and taken nothing, yet, let him not despair. For the same miraculous power, that was here displayed over the fishes of the sea, can bring men, "dead in

* 1 Timothy 6, 11.

trespasses and sins," *alive* into the Gospel net, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for, as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."* Surely the enquiry of the sublime and inspired Seer was a realizing anticipation by faith of the great fact. And what enlightened Christian is not prepared to expect the glorious era when such achievements shall be effected? Let the modern missionary and faithful minister of Christ rejoice that a reaping-time of joy *will* come, even though he may "sow in tears." Hindooism, and any other idolatry or superstition may fall, as if instantaneously, with a mighty crash. Even now its foundations may be being sapped in the Christian education of not a few youths, in the imbuing of the public mind with the knowledge of the Saving Truths of God, in the leaven of the impressions and convictions that the exhibition of consistent and genuine Christianity never fails to produce. All that may be wanting is a pentecostal effusion of the Spirit of Christ to quicken the mighty mass of perishing sinners to spiritual and Divine life. Oh! that in faith and striving earnestness of supplication the Church and the children of God would take the Heavenly Boon!

How well may we apply to either the sorrowing believer, or the labouring yet unsuccessful servant of Jesus Christ in the Gospel Ministry, the counsel of the Psalmist, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say, on the Lord."† "In the morning," says the wise man, "sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper: either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."‡ "Preach the Word," said the dying Apostle of the Gentiles to his beloved son Timothy, "be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."§ How well may we anticipate that men, who work

* Isaiah 66, 8,

† Psalm 27, 14.

‡ Ecclesiastes 11, 6.

§ 2 Timothy 4, 2.

and wait as Simon and his friends did, who evince such a taste and relish for "the sincere milk of the Word," in season or out of season, "that they may grow thereby," and who will act just as their Lord directs,—that these men shall succeed in their ministerial calling. Truly the record of their piety should stimulate both those who minister, and those who are ministered unto, to be ever ready for every good work, not to be easily discouraged, to avail themselves of every proper opportunity either to hear or to communicate the Word of life, and to follow the Lord fully, walking in all His commandments and ordinances blameless.

We are next invited to witness the wonderful effects of the presence of Christ and of the miracle wrought by Him. We have seen that the net was rent or in danger of breaking; for it did not actually break, else the fish would have been lost. At verse 7th we read, "And they beckoned unto their partners, that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink." They were in danger of being submerged. Peter in particular was affected in an extraordinary degree, "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Verse 8).

To understand something of the feelings, sentiments, and deep convictions of Peter, we should remember that he had long been a godly man. He and his brother Andrew, who first brought him to Jesus, appear to have been disciples of John the Baptist. Since the ministry of Christ began, Peter had from time to time heard Him preach, and he believed in Him as the promised Messiah. He with his brother Andrew and James and John, all of whom were now present, had been called to follow Jesus, who told them that He would make them "fishers of men." Peter had just been listening to the words of the Son of man, and they carried conviction to the conscience of the upright and solemnized disciple. He had been convinced of some special sin, of coldness in his love to God, of backsliding, of sin against Jesus. He had experienced a renewed manifestation of the Truth to his conscience. He felt more than ever that Jesus was the Omniscient. After

the miracle of the fishes, and when the ship seemed about to sink, he took guilt to himself. He thought his sinfulness the cause of the catastrophe. Overwhelmed with emotion, he exclaimed, not knowing what he said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

What seriousness and simplicity do we witness in this good man! How contrasted does he stand with the evasive, uncandid, and carnal spirit of men in general, as respects their own sins! There is in the case of Peter more than the Divine manifestation of Truth to the conscience. The women of Samaria, Nathanael, Thomas and others experienced this manifestation, and powerfully felt that Jesus was the Omniscient. Peter also realized this awful idea. But he did more. He obtained such a view of the Divine purity of Christ, and of his own defilement, as made him heartily conclude that his proximity to his Master was the cause of ruin to himself and his brethren. We may discover similar states of mind in Job and in Paul, when brought nigh to the full apprehension of the unsullied brightness of the perfections of God, together with deep convictions of personal guilt and vileness.

The Lord of the conscience and the God-man Saviour of sinners spoke comfortably to His prostrate and contrite follower. Notwithstanding the error of the utterance of Peter, Christ knew that his heart was right. It was the opposite of that of the wicked who desire the Almighty to depart from them. Nothing did the humbled and repentant Peter so greatly desire as that he were meet for the society and communion of God. Accordingly we hear his Lord encouragingly address him. "Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

If any part of Simon's sin consisted in not having rendered that constant attendance upon Jesus that love should have constrained him to give, he and his companions sinned no more in this respect. From that hour they relinquished their secular calling and devoted themselves entirely to Christ in the ministry of reconciliation. "And, when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all and followed Him." (Verse 11).

How admirable is the Word of God! When carried home

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to the understanding and the heart by the Spirit of Christ, it quickens the dead sinner, searches, rebukes, and restores the backslider, edifies the weak, strengthens, and comforts the believer. Who can estimate the blessedness of which many among the vast throngs, who have trusted upon Christ to hear the truths of Salvation, were made partakers! It is animating in no common degree to contemplate a mighty mass of travellers to eternity congregated to hear what God the Lord will speak unto them. How incalculable the responsibility of the Minister of Christ, who delivers the message of God to them! How appropriate the counsel of Paul to Timothy for every such ambassador of the Cross, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."*

The spirit in which we ought to hear the Word of God is impressively set before us in the text. With joy, alacrity, and self-denial we should unite with others at all proper times for this duty. We should listen with attention, spirituality of mind and self-application. Let us guard against judging others. Let us seek to obtain the saving and sanctifying manifestation of the Faith of Christ to our own conscience. Humbled, yet believing and confiding, let us turn from all sin, advance in all goodness, forsake all and follow Jesus fully.

Let us sing Paraphrase 39, 2.

Let us pray.

What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits? Thanks be unto God for His "unspeakable gift," Christ Jesus. May we all individually, Heavenly Father, know the blessedness of the man who is both a hearer and a doer of Thy Word, "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquities, and in whose spirit there is no guile." May

* 1 Timothy 4, 15, 16.



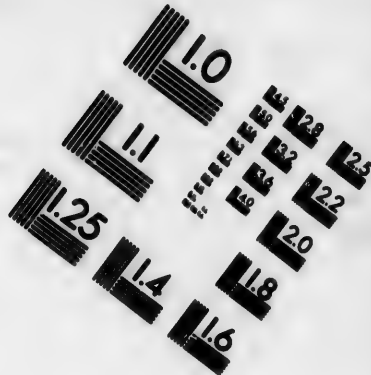
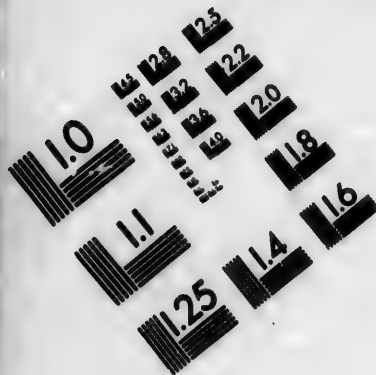
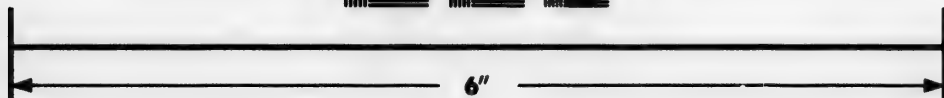
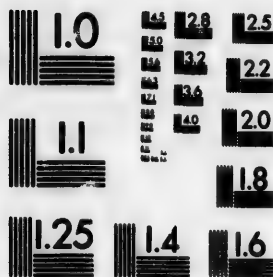


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Age Group	Percentage
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35-44	2.2%
45-54	2.5%
55-64	2.8%
65-74	3.2%
75-84	3.6%
85+	4.4%

each of us be enabled with Thy holy servant to say, "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with Thee."²⁷

Manifest Thy Truth, Gracious God, in the convictions of our consciences that the Word read and heard is Thine, and that it is designed for our salvation. Enable us to receive the Truth in the love of it, and to walk in it. May we depart from all iniquity. May we keep our tongues from evil, and our lips from speaking guile. May we be ready for every good work. While we guard against being "slothful in business," may we be "servant in spirit, serving the Lord."

Our earnest prayer, Lord, is, that all old things, which are evil with respect to ourselves, may pass away, and that all things may become new. And may we with a growing sense of our impurity and vileness, and of Thy infinite purity and hatred of sin, yet cleave unto Thee with full purpose of heart. To whom, Lord, shall we go but to Thee, in whom alone is our hope, against whom we have sinned, and from whom alone we can receive the remission of our sins. O purify us, Almighty Father, unto Thyself, as of Thy peculiar people who are zealous of all good works.

Bless all whom we should remember in supplication. Bless Thine ancient people, the Jews. May the tribe of Israel with the Gentile nations believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Bless our fellow-seamen of every country and class. May they fear Thy name, and strive to convey the knowledge of Salvation to their perishing fellow-men. Bless our own country, our Queen, her Royal Consort, the Royal Family of which they are the parents and heads, and all who are under our Sovereign and over us. Enable us, Holy Father, to be faithful and conscientious in the discharge of every duty, not as eye-servants, but as those who serve the Lord Christ. And, when our service in this world shall come to a close, and the voyage of life shall have been performed, O may we be admitted to that blessed state where all are perfectly blessed in

the enjoyment of God for ever. And this we beg through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 25, 6.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

TABLE I	
Year	Amount
1880	100
1881	120
1882	150
1883	180
1884	200
1885	220
1886	250
1887	280
1888	300
1889	320
1890	350
1891	380
1892	400
1893	420
1894	450
1895	480
1896	500
1897	520
1898	550
1899	580
1900	600

ELEVENTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praises in Psalm 8, 2.

Let us pray.

We adore Thee, Heavenly Father, as the God of all goodness. Thou art infinite in wisdom, power, and all perfection. We rejoice in Thy glorious character. How marvelous are Thy condescension and love to a guilty and ruined world! May we be partakers of the benefits which flow from the mission and merits of Thy Only-begotten and well Beloved Son.

We would now by faith "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." Send forth the Spirit of Thy Son into our hearts that we may be quickened to newness of life in Christ. We feel that we need such a Saviour, who can both pardon our sins and renovate our natures. Blessed be Thy name, the blood of Thine Anointed One cleanseth from all sin. His atonement is adequate for all sinners who apply to Him. May we be cleansed from all our pollution for His sake, and have the guilt of all our sins removed. Justify us freely by Thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And implant in our soul, O Thou God and Father of our Lord and Saviour, the righteousness that dwells in Him. By a vital union with Him may we participate in all the principles of His holiness. May the meekness, gentleness, purity, love, long-suffering, patience, self-denial, and unwearied beneficence, which He exhibited in our nature and on our behalf, be reflected in us. May we receive out of His fulness, even grace for grace.

Pour out upon us, Thou Giver of all good, a spirit of true and earnest devotion. Enable us to cease from all profaneness, and to attain to the happiness of those who are prayerful. Teach us to "pray without ceasing." With Thee is the residue of the Spirit. It was Thy grace that taught the Disciples in the storm to cry to Jesus for help and safety ! So teach us in like manner to trust in the Lord at all times. When in darkness, may we, like them, know how to address the cry of our humble supplication to our King and our God.

How full of consolation to the child of God is the Word of Inspired Truth ! Thy promise is to every such one, "He, that keepeth Thee, will not slumber. Behold He, that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper." Adored be Thy name, Almighty Parent, for the abundant consolation which such assurances supply to the Christian mariner. Oh ! make each of us to be in very deed of this class. May we be followers of Christ in faith and love. All Thy Promises are in Him Yea and Amen. And by our union with Him we shall realize the felicity that flows from Thy everlasting love to His ransomed people.

It is our delight to call to remembrance upon this Thy Sacred Day that the Lord is with us. How happy are they who have an Omnipotent and sympathizing Saviour with them ! And such, blessed be the God of Salvation, has every contrite and believing seaman. We triumph in the conviction that our Redeemer rules the winds and the storms and waves of the sea. Though He may seem to be asleep, our rejoicing is that no real evil can befall any who are His. May we be so. And, when the tempests, and voyages, and trials of this our mortal life are closed, may we be among the glorified throng of every kindred and clime, of landmen and "those who go down to the sea in ships," who shall dwell for ever with the Lord.

Be graciously present with us, Holy Father, in our solemn exercises upon the present occasion. May Thy Word be accompanied with saving power, with Thy effectual blessing to our souls. Bless all our fellow-seamen and fellow-wor-

shippers at sea or on shore this day. Multiply grace, mercy, love and peace unto all Thy children. Remember for good the seed of Abraham. May they become spiritually the children of Thy friend, the father of the faithful. Have mercy upon all mankind. Listen to the voice of our humble and fervent prayer, and graciously accept of us through Jesus Christ our Only Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 103, 11.

Read Isaiah 32.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Matthew VIII., 23-27.

It is evident from the context that our Lord at the time referred to had been exceedingly occupied. This was occasioned by the multitudes that repaired to Him for the remedy of their bodily sufferings or on account of their spiritual necessities. The Divine Physician and the Spirit-anointed Teacher, whose advent prophets had long ago predicted, the glories of whose reign inspired Psalmists in anticipation had sung, and for whose day the pious of every age had longed, was at length manifested in the person of the Man Christ Jesus. And though, when He came to His own, His own received Him not, He yet proved that the asseveration of the

sublime Seer would be verified, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law."^{*}

It is at once thrilling in the highest degree, and intensely affecting, to read of the progress of the Redeemer about this period of His career. The appreciation also, in which He was held by vast numbers of those who felt that they were sinners ready to perish, is grateful and animating. Surely it will gladden the heart of the Christian, and tend to call forth his best affections to that Blessed Saviour who loved him and gave Himself for him, to listen to evangelist after evangelist depicting the scenes, that were then enacted, in such statements as the following, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those that were possessed of devils, and those that were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them. And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan. And, seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain; and, when He was set, His disciples came unto Him. And He opened His mouth, and taught them."[†] This introduces us to the longest of Christ's recorded discourses, His Sermon on the Mount, the most comprehensive and the most minute of all sermons, the sermon which for simplicity, weight, power, clearness, and spirituality, has no parallel. Reader, go through attentively and with reflection that choicest of productions, and then say if you cannot sympathize with the feelings of the mighty throng of profoundly attentive listeners who first heard the Sermon, when of them it is said, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: For He taught them as one having authority, and

^{*} Isaiah 42, 4.

[†] Matthew 4, 23, &c.

not as the Scribes."* Another of the addresses of the Great Prophet of the Church of God is thus prefaced, "In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people insomuch that they trode one upon another, He began to say unto His disciples first of all."† And in connection with our text we read of "multitudes," of "great multitudes" who had followed Jesus. At the close of a day, upon which it is truly computed that Jesus had performed more miracles than had ever been accomplished by any preceding prophet during a life-time, we read, "When then even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils : and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick." (v. 16.)

Such was the day upon the evening of which Jesus embarked with His disciples to cross the Lake of Galilee. Ready, as He always was, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the sorrowing, and to save with an everlasting salvation the perishing children of men, His human nature, which, though sinless, was frail, required repose. It was no doubt partly to secure this indispensable rest and refreshment that Jesus intimated to the eager crowds His desire that they should withdraw for the present. This was done by His giving commandment to the Disciples "to depart to the other side." Having met the necessity of every applicant and ministered the bread of life everlasting to every hungering listener, He left His Disciples to dismiss the people. He had fulfilled His purposes of grace and mercy to the immortal beings there assembled in so far as was needful then. And He hastened to embark on board of the boat which was to conduct Him to the locality where His Divine power and goodness were to be very conspicuously manifested. While the individuals, mentioned in the verses preceding our text, detained Him a little, His attendant ministers had succeeded in persuading the throng to dismiss, with the exception of those persons who resolved to accompany Jesus and the Disciples, for we are told that "there were also with Him other little ships."‡ We

* Matthew 7, 28, 29.

† Luke 12, 1.

‡ Mark 4, 36.

then read, (v. 23), "And, when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him."

If we associate the wonderful restoration of the demoniac as narrated by Mark, (chap. 5), and the results of that surpassing miracle, with what we here read of Christ's being first in the ship, we shall perceive the holy zeal and love by which 'the Son of Man' was actuated. Fatigued as He was, He sought no downy pillow on which to lay His wearied head, but continued to prosecute His labours of beneficence and salvation with unwearied ardour. It is true that His human frame was well-nigh overcome by the incessant toils and unceasing applications with which He had been engaged. It is true that, though perfectly free from the sins of our nature, he partook of all its frailty and weakness. But it is equally true that the indispensable recruiting of His earthly tabernacle by means of sleep was rendered by this Glorious King of Zion subservient and secondary to His grand and essential design, the recovery and restoration of sinners. What He Himself declared of His necessary food might with equal propriety have been affirmed of His sleep. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."*

Such undoubtedly was the spirit that actuated the Holy Saviour when on the evening of a day eminently memorable for labours of Divine love, power and wisdom, He entered the boat in which with His disciples He intended crossing the Sea of Tiberias. Soon after leaving the shore we may suppose, and while the Lake was still and serene, Jesus sought for a brief season of rest and sleep. He reclined His head on a pillow, which in all probability was either an appurtenance, or formed a part of the material, or belonged to the furniture of the open boat in which He was sailing. Nor did "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" seek in vain for nature's sweet restorer. The holy peace that reigned in the inner man aided in obtaining for the body its required reviver.

With what resistless force should the spectacle now before us impress on the heart of the follower of Jesus the lesson, as sublime as it is solemn and simple, of keeping always in view

* John 4, 34.

the honour of God and the good of man so that our corporeal refreshment, sleep, and whatever else is needful or proper for the sustaining and recruiting of the body and animal spirits, may be made to contribute and minister to those high and holy purposes. In this way will the Christian be enabled to say with St. Paul, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."^{*} "I sleep, but my heart waketh,"[†] exclaimed the bride, even when her zeal and love were flagging and dull. While we should never be satisfied for a moment until we can warrantably and truly make a similar averment, we should not think it enough that "the root of the matter is in us," or that we have received Divine grace to the extent that has constituted us "babes in Christ;" we should ever strive to be vigilant, self-denying, on the alert, wakeful, advancing in love, spirituality, and habits of beneficence. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business,"[‡] said the child Jesus to Joseph and Mary. This business was constantly present with Him and before Him. Who does not already see that in the instance before us He kept it steadily in view, so that, even when He was "asleep" in the boat, we may with propriety say, He lost not sight of it for a moment. How illustriously He glorified His Father even by His being asleep will yet farther appear as we advance! O let His friends and disciples drink deeply at the well-spring of the Word and Spirit and Communion of God, of the consecration and ceaseless devotion to the Divine glory which they may here observe exhibited in the Head of the Church.

How interesting to every one who loves Immanuel, and how especially interesting to the Christian mariner and traveller, must the Lake of Galilee always remain! We could almost fancy that, when there shall be "a new heaven, and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," that hallowed scene shall delight the ransomed inhabitants of a renovated world. And here I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting what were the sensations and reflections that were experienced by

* 1 Corinthians 9, 27.

† Song of Solomon 5, 2.

‡ Luke 2, 49.

a bold, an enterprising, and a successful sailor on witnessing its honoured waters. "Like a mirror, it lay embosomed in its rounded and beautiful, but treeless hills. How dear to the Christian are memories of that Lake! The Lake of the New Testament! Bles-ed beyond the nature of its element, it has borne the Son of God upon its surface. Its cliffs first echoed the glad tidings of Salvation, and from its villages the first of the Apostles were gathered to the Ministry. Its placid water and its shelving beach; the ruined cities once crowded with men, and the everlasting hills, the handiwork of God,—all identify and attest the wonderful miracles that were here performed—miracles the least of which was a crowning act of mercy of an Incarnate God towards His sinful and erring creatures. . . . Near by was the field where, according to tradition, the Disciples plucked the ears of corn upon the Sabbath. Yet nearer was the spot where the Saviour fed the famishing multitude; and to the left the mount of Beatitudes, where He preached His wonderful compound of wisdom and love."

One feature of the natural history of the holy Lake was, that it was subject to sudden and terrific storms. An unexpected squall frequently endangered the lives and property of those who sailed upon its waters. The dread hurricane would come down from the surrounding hills, imperilling the safety of every bark on the surface of the Sea. For such a tornado the fishermen of Galilee had been able to make but little preparation. They had not the aid of the famed barometer, whose omens might indicate the approach of danger. And what could they have done, had they even received the most certain prognostications? We have seen the watchful and masterly commander of the well qualified sea-boat with an energy and skill that excited admiration, setting his ship in order that he might be ready for the storm which he saw was approaching with fearful rapidity. And we have read of the practised eye of another Master detecting from the dreadfully rapid falling of his weather-glass, while as yet the whole sea around was perfectly calm, that the raging and destructive

* "The Dead Sea and the Jordan, by Lieut. Lynch.

tempest was impending at the rate of a speed that threatened to engulf his bark and crew in the abyss beneath. To the surprise of even the experienced mariners every sail was ordered to be instantly taken in. But, before this operation was completed, the hurricane had overtaken the noble ship, which after every precaution could scarce sustain the onset and the gale. All would certainly have perished, had not the praiseworthy shipmaster with his intelligent and scrutinizing glance read correctly the omened language of his glass.

But the boatmen, with whom Jesus was crossing the Lake of Galilee, though destitute of the advantages of modern discovery and science, were yet safe. They had on board their little vessel One whose presence was a pledge and a guarantee that all would be well with them. How appropriately might they by faith have adopted the sacred strains of Israel's inspired Psalmist, "My help cometh from the Lord, that made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He, that keepeth thee, will not slumber. Behold, He, that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."* What, though the storm might rage and the tempest be unprecedented! They had not only the promises of God to His Israel to sustain their faith and animate their courage; they had the Jehovah of Israel Himself along with them and as one of themselves, that glorious Personage of whom they had read and heard in the lofty lay of the enraptured prophet who drew upon all the powers of language the most sublime to convey some idea of Him of whom he spoke, "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."†

But, though these attached and genuine Disciples believed in Jesus as the true and promised Messiah, their knowledge

* Psalm 121.

† Isaiah 9, 6.

and understanding of His peculiar character and attributes were neither very extensive nor very accurate. Their faith consequently was neither very strong nor very specific. Their love and personal regard for their Master were in advance of their faith. At a much later period we hear Him saying to them, as if at once to reprove them for their slowness and to impel them to growth and vigour, "Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in Me."*

To bear this in mind will the more readily enable us to apprehend exactly the position and spiritual stage of these honoured friends of "the Prince of Life." We will then be able to read with more zest and profit the narrative before us, "And, when He was entered into a ship, His Disciples followed Him, and behold, there arose a great tempest in the Sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves : but He was asleep. And His Disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us : we perish. And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?"

How true a picture have we here of many a weak believer in the time of distress ! How frequently do the children of God fail to remember who is with them ! They look rather to the elements of their sorrow and anxiety than to Him who assigns and controls and sanctifies to them the afflictive dispensations of Providence. Observe one great cause of this sinful weakness is, they forget or are not sufficiently acquainted with the character of Christ, the Ruler in the allotments of life, the Governor of all things. Let the child of God with holy confidence and humble faith learn to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." What ill then can possibly befall me while under His guardianship and guidance, while cleaving to Him in the path of duty with full purpose of heart ? True, the disciple may not know his Lord as he ought to know Him, may not know Him as Omnipotent and full of love and compassion. The Disciples in the storm did not do so. Hence their trouble. And often so the disciples, who are now called to endure the storms that will assail the voyagers who are sailing with Christ over life's

* John 14. 1.

troubulous sea, lose sight, by reason of unbelief and smallness of faith, of their Lord's ability and willingness and determination to do for them exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think. Had the boatmen on the tempestuous Lake perceived with the eye of sense that they were guarded and preserved by legions of holy angels, they might have felt comforted and peaceful and assured of safety. But, had their eye of faith been piercing and unclouded, they would have discovered that they had with them and for them the Lord of angels, the Jehovah of Hosts, the Keeper of Israel. In the hour of trial, and when calamity threatens to swallow us up, O let every Christian know in whom he has believed, and know who his Lord is, and confide fully in Him. Happy, thrice happy are all they who thus trust in the Lord. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

The Christian seaman in particular, who has fled for refuge to Him who is "the hope of Israel," may derive comfort and confidence from the incidents of this little voyage of Jesus and the Disciples. Let the believer of "those who go down to the sea in ships" realize the presence, love, wisdom and power of his Lord. Let him be strong in faith. His Redeemer is with him as he ploughs the stormy Ocean. And, though there may arise "a great tempest in the sea inasmuch that the ship shall be covered with the waves; or though he may be well-nigh overwhelmed or submerged by any other personal or relative distress, by the sufferings of the body or the sorrows of the soul, yet let him rejoice. He knows in whom he has believed. Let him listen to the consoling prophet, "And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest."† What unspeakable peace may the believing voyager derive, when his sins are brought vividly to his remembrance by the perils of the deep, by the Providence of God, from the teaching of the Disciple whom Jesus loved. "And, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: And He is the Pro-

* Psalm 27, 14.

† Isaiah 32, 2.

pitiation of our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Such a mariner knows well that the drift of all Holy Scripture is to teach them to " sin not." Yet, alas ! his own conscience convicts him of innumerable and of aggravated sins ! His resource then, his only and infinitely adequate resource, is in his Advocate and Propitiation. And, oh ! how well does it become " Jesus Christ the Righteous" to be the contrite sinner's Advocate, to plead his cause before a just and righteous God ! It was for such He veiled His Deity and Divine glory, became man, humbled Himself so that He sailed and slept, and lived a man while yet as man He fulfilled all righteousness, and after His zeal and love had induced Him to do all this, He laid down His life, He died a propitiatory sacrifice for man, guilty man. Does the noble and generous benefactor take liveliest interest in the individual upon whom he has bestowed his prayers, his means, his anxieties, his affections, his all ? Oh ! how well may the Son of Man be an Advocate for the saved sinner, seeing that He loved him with an everlasting love and purchased his ransom and renovation with the price of His own precious blood.

But again listen to that voice of the Omnipotent, " Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else."* And is this the voice of Him who is " the Offspring of David ?" It is. But, while it pertains to the office of faith to believe in His true and essential humanity, faith must also recognize the blissful truth that the Man Christ Jesus is Head over all things for the Church, angels, principalities and all heavenly powers being subject unto Him ; and farther that in the nature of man this glorious Head and Representative claims and receives all and more than all its primeval honour and dignity from the August Father of Creation. This is intimated by the Psalmist, " Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands : Thou has put all things under His feet ; All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field ; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths

* Isaiah 45, 22.

of the seas.”* It is in the person of the Man Christ Jesus rather than in that of our first Federal Head, of the second rather than of the first Adam that we must look for the implementing of this grandeur of position. Especially is this the case as respects the sea and its inhabitants.

How full of grace and tenderness, as well as of fidelity and truth is the adorable Redeemer ! While He fails not to reprove what is culpable in His followers, He fails not on the other hand to compassionate their infirmity and dispel their fears. He verifies the statement of the Psalmist, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame ; He remembereth that we are dust.”† So it was with the Disciples in the storm. We read that they came to Him, saying, Lord, save us ; we perish. And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea ; and there was a great calm.”

The question might here be proposed and discussed whether the Spirit of evil, “the Prince of the power of the air” successfully employed his agency in raising this storm. Marking the unprecedented success of our Lord’s mighty and miraculous works, the multitudes that were repairing to hear the Gospel from His lips, and the prospects that appeared to be opening of new triumphs on the other side of the Sea of Gennesaret, the Leader of the Hosts of accursed and potent spirits, dreading that his empire and sway might immediately be annulled, may have resolved to put forth a stupendous effort to destroy “the Holy One of God.” Gathering what his object was in going to “the country of the Gergesenes,” the deliverance and restoration of the demoniacs, especially of the unhappy subject of whom a legion had taken possession, Satan may have resolved to use his mightiest exertions to swallow up and sink in the depth of the Sea the boat in which Jesus sailed. To what extent the exercise of such a power may be tolerated in the mighty head of the rebel creation, or be consistent with the wisdom of the Most High, we know

* Psalm 8, 6, 8.

† Psalm 103, 13, 14.

not. But here is the important truth that should always be borne in mind; he is after all only allowed to go so far as will subserve the purposes of God. Be it, if you will, that the great Dragon is permitted by his knowledge, skill, power, and the aid of his subordinates, to produce at any given time, or in any given way, a storm; and this may not be more mysterious than that he should be allowed to inflict calamity, disease and insanity upon man, still it is ultimately Jehovah that "commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind," as it is He who suffers and directs the operation of the disorders of mankind. And it should also be impressed upon the understanding and the heart that Jesus not only rules in Providence and sways the sceptre of universal empire, all creatures and things being subject unto Him in His capacity of Head of the Church, which He has purchased with His blood, but moreover that since His advent in the flesh, since the ejection of the evil spirits by His word after His incarnation, the inroads of Satanic spirits upon humanity as to demoniacal possession and their ability in general have been restrained. They dread most exceedingly the Son of God who, they are aware, will one day summon them to His bar of judgement and award them to be for ever incarcerated in the prison-house of Hell, to be restrained from evil aggressions upon this world and to be made to endure more direful punishment than previously they had experienced. We thus can understand one reason of their protest against the Saviour as arising from their fears of immediate imprisonment and fulness of the penalties to which they are doomed. The devils, we are told, "cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (v. 29). What an attestation have we even here of the Sovereignty and Supremacy of the King of Zion!

We thus perceive that the question, whether "the prince of this world" was the agent in the storm that seemed to bid fair to swallow up both Jesus and His disciples, is of very minor importance. "This is the only place in our Saviour's life in which it is said that He was asleep, and is just the very occasion on which we might have supposed that He

should have remained awake. But Jesus sometimes sleeps in order to try the faith of His disciples, and to lead them to feel their constant need of His watchful care." The Christian will in all circumstances find perfect peace and entire satisfaction in the assurance that "all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."*

We are often, perhaps, struck at the slowness of the Disciples to believe all and fully that with which we see they ought to have been familiar. An instance of this kind we have in the text. "But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the Sea obey Him!" (v. 27). Now why, we may ask, were they so astonished? Had they not already seen miracles in abundance performed by their Master? And were not some of them as really grand as that was which they now beheld?—that, for example, of the cure of the Centurion's servant without the personal presence of Christ? Had Jesus ever been baffled or any thing been seen that was too hard for Him? And yet the surprise of the seafaring friends of the Messiah was natural. They had never heard of or seen or imagined such a suspension of the laws of nature as that before them. What would add to their wonder and admiration was the instantaneousness of the calm that followed the storm. Usually after a heavy gale there is a great swell before the sea is calm. But here was a man who by His own authority stilled the tumults of the elements and changed the infuriated Sea into the peaceful unruffled Lake. There was here no delegated power. The omnipotent God Himself was here present and had performed the miracle, had issued His mandate to the winds and waters, which without delay or demur rendered promptest obedience to their Lord. All this conspired to produce amazement in the minds of the fishermen of Galilee. Their faith required expansion, enlargement, vigour. Had it been more matured, they would have recognized in

* 1 Corinthians 3, 21, &c.

Jesus of Nazareth that Jehovah who of old "rode upon a cherub and did fly ; yea He did fly upon the wings of the wind."*

"To him that hath shall be given." So it happened in the case of the Disciples of Jesus. They were true men. They had given themselves heartily unto the Lord. We have seen that their love was in advance of their faith. Their love would impel their faith, for faith works by love.

How happy are all they who love the Lord Jesus Christ ! They are so even in darkness and distress. In every season of difficulty let the followers of the Lamb pray. Even though weak in faith, their prayer will never be rejected. Their Redeemer will interpose for them. On His Mediatorial throne He ever lives to plead, intercedes for them, and presents their prayers.

Hearers of the Gospel, oh ! obey the call, sent you in it, to repent, believe, and be saved. O love the Lord whose compassion is commensurate with His power to save. Resolve in His strength cheerfully and cordially to submit to Christ, to deny self, take up the Cross daily, and follow the Captain of Salvation until finally you have gained the Land of uprightness and glory.

Let us sing Psalm 42, 7.

Let us pray.

We again draw nigh unto Thee, Father of mercies and God of all grace, in the Name of Thy Only and Well-Beloved Son, beseeching Thee to bless to us the truths and lessons of Thy Holy Word. Oh ! let none of us fail to become of the genuine Disciples of Christ. May we supremely love Him and so believe in Him as to know Him in the power of His Salvation from sin and in the progressive renovation of His Spirit unto all that is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight.

We entreat Thee, O Lord, in behalf of Thy servants who are called to labour in the Ministry of the Blessed Gospel of Thy Son. May they be men of prayer, of strong and enlarged faith, with much love to Thee shed abroad in their

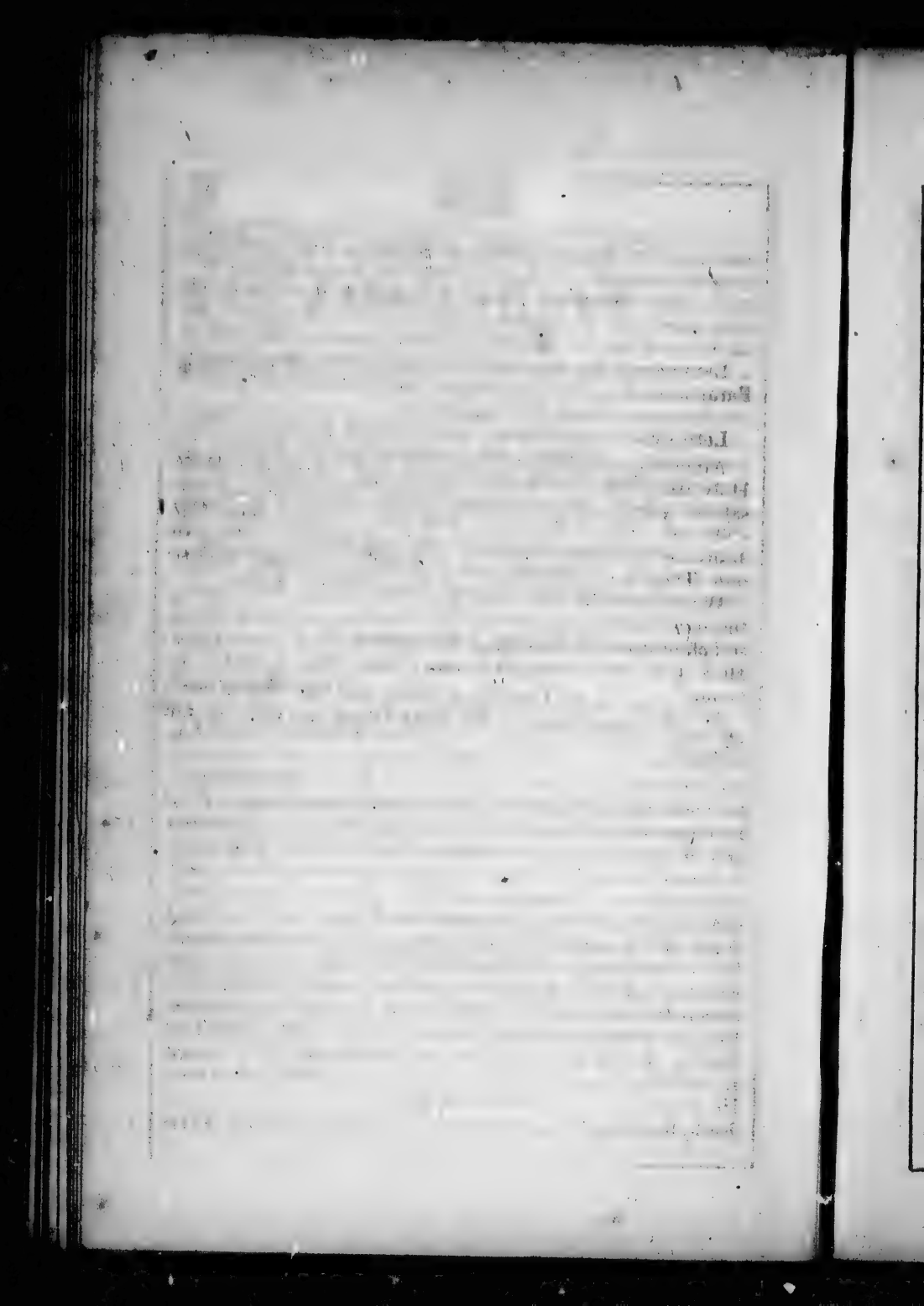
* Psalm 18, 10.

hearts. May they be faithful, self-denying, docile, and able men, apt to teach. And, Oh ! may they have abundant success in their holy work. May the Word from their lips be felt by unnumbered multitudes to be, not the word of man, but the Word of the Living God, a Divine treasure committed to earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be manifestly of God. May Thy servants be honoured both to save themselves and those who hear them.

Bless all who are favoured with Christian privileges. Bless our Country, our Queen, and her Royal Consort, with the interesting Royal Family which Thou hast entrusted to their charge. Bless all our fellow-subjects and fellow-seamen. Bless all over us in lawful authority. Regard with Thy favour our friends, benefactors, and well-wishers. Forgive our enemies. Compassionate a world of perishing sinners. Graciously accept of us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 29, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.



TWELFTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Paraphrase 46, 1.

Let us pray.

Almighty and Most Merciful Father, we adore Thee as the Holy One of Israel. Praised be Thy Name, we are for the sake of Thy Blessed Son permitted and encouraged to draw nigh unto Thee with confidence, love, and reverence. In Jesus we have boldness both to supplicate and give thanks unto Thee, the God and the Giver of all good.

We would this day avail ourselves of the grace that is through Christ Jesus and unite our humble devotion with the seraphim who "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

We desire, Heavenly Father, to give glory unto Thee for all Thy goodness to us. We praise Thee for "the Holy Scriptures," and all the means of Salvation with which we are favoured. May we sincerely and strenuously endeavour to "sin not." Alas! our own consciences convict us of innumerable sins, many of them against light and the strivings of Thy Spirit. Lord, have mercy on us and renew us to all holiness in the image of Thy Anointed Son. We plead guilty before Thee, O Thou against whom we have sinned. We dare not do otherwise. For our own hearts condemn us, and Thou art greater than our hearts and knowest all things. Our consolation is that the contrite sinner has "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." O how well does it become this great High Priest, who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, to intercede for the repentant sinner. It was for such He came to this world. For such He fulfilled His mission of mercy and restoration. For such He veiled His Deity and Divine glory, became obedient unto death, fulfilling all righteousness as the Representative of His

people and giving Himself a ransom for their sins. May we have the faith and love that will enable us to say truly, "And He is the Propitiation for our sins." We rejoice, Holy Father, in Thy compassion in having furnished us with such an All-sufficient Saviour, and that He pleads with perfect success on behalf of every humble disciple what He has done as "Jesus Christ the Righteous," and what He has endured as "the Sin-offering" of His followers. O how affecting is the plea! May we learn experimentally how powerful and all-prevailing it is on our behalf.

We implore Thy rich blessing, Thou God of all goodness, upon the exercises in which we are now to be engaged. Accept in the Beloved our devotion. And may we meditate upon the marvellous power, wisdom and loving care of the Good Shepherd of the sheep with great delight and profit.

Bless all our friends and fellow-worshippers this day. May the Lord of the Sabbath impart to them the holiness which the Sabbath has been given to promote. Compassionate the ignorant, the profane, and all who are out of the Way. Sanctify the afflictions of the seed of Jacob. And overrule for their everlasting good the trials of many who have not yet become wise unto salvation. In an especial manner we commend unto Thee all mariners, and those who are connected with the sea. May they be touched by the constraining love of Christ to obey His commands. May they yield themselves to Him as His ransomed children. And the glory we will ascribe to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing in Psalm 135, 4.

Let us read Luke 18.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Matthew XIV. 23—33.

From the narrative of St. John we learn that the multitude, who had participated in the miraculous repast upon the five barley loaves and two small fishes, were resolved to take Jesus by force and make Him a king. With this small supply He had fed five thousand men besides women and children. All these had eaten abundantly and been satisfied. Twelve baskets, full of fragments or broken meat, had afterwards been gathered by the Disciples, from which it is evident that all had enjoyed great plenty. "Then those men," says the Apostle, "when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world."

Excited by temporary admiration and convictions, impatient of the Roman yoke, and longing for their expected Messiah, who, they supposed, would not only restore their independence, but would elevate them to the highest superiority as a nation, the multitude before us, convinced that Jesus was the predicted Saviour, and concluding that an excess of modesty prevented Him from asserting His rightful claims and sovereign dignity, resolved that they would employ a little friendly constraint in order that He might assume what they considered His proper position. With the power of working miracles, which their Benefactor possessed, they doubted not that He could overcome and suppress every enemy.

But He, who knew what was in man, and who was the Wisdom of God, was well aware both of the error of their carnal sentiments respecting the King of Israel, and of the unbroken enmity of their hearts to the things of the Spiritual Kingdom of God. He at once therefore determined to prevent the farther attempting to carry out the proposal, and also to address rebuke and instruction to the persons who wished to act in such a manner. In the sixth Chap. of John we have recorded our Lord's conversation with the people who came

to Capernaum seeking for Jesus, in which the Divine Teacher sifts and separates between the precious and the vile, the worldling and the humble child of God.

From what we know of the Apostles, we may conclude that they would not have been unwilling to see their Master obliged to avow Himself in His kingly capacity in the manner intended by the multitude. Though men of a very different character, they sympathized not a little with the national pride and ambition which actuated those men who did eat of the loaves and were filled. The one class was actuated by that love of the world which cannot consist with the love of the Father in the soul, the other were regenerated children of God. This was very strikingly shown at the time when many of those, who had been professing disciples of Christ, went back and walked no more with Him. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered Him. Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve."*

When He, whose kingdom is not of this world, intended to disappoint the plans of selfish and designing men, we read, "And straightway Jesus constrained His Disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He sent the multitudes away." We learn from the parallel passage in Mark (6, 45), that Bethsaida was the town for which the Disciples were to set out in their boat. "And straightway He constrained His Disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side unto Bethsaida, while He sent away the people." We learn from St. Luke that the Apostles had been with their Lord in a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida, (9, 10).

This desert was probably distant a few miles from Bethsaida, and separated from it by some bay or arm of the Sea

* John 6, 67 &c.

running up into the land. It was this water that Jesus now enjoined His Disciples to cross in their boat that they might reach the city. In seeking to account for the evident unwillingness of the Apostles to leave their Master and to allow Him to dismiss the vast company now in attendance, we might suggest that they did not wish Him to be obliged to walk by land to the town, a distance of from three to six miles. But it will also readily occur, that they were very anxious that He should not lose the present favourable conjuncture for asserting and establishing His sovereignty as King of the Jews. How far fatigue or the foreboding of a tempest on the Sea may have influenced them, we know not. But the heavenly wisdom, meekness, and prudence of their Lord, who cannot perceive? And what enlightened mind will refuse the tribute of sincere admiration to Him, whose conduct we are contemplating? Shall we not also admire the loving fealty of the genuine followers of the Lamb? Erring and but babes in spirituality though they obviously were, associated also with one who was even then known to be "a devil" by the Omniscient Head of the Body, with Judas a leading and an able member of the little band, whose agency, there can be little doubt, had been already exercised in seeking to kiss the eleven; we yet plainly discover the evidence of vital union with Jesus, of supreme love to Him in whom they believed as the Son and the Sent of God. For only ask what is signified by Jesus constraining them to enter the ship and notwithstanding all their disinclination their setting sail in compliance with His directions? What constraint did the Master employ with His crew, save that of which St. Paul speaks when he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." Imperfect as they were, aspiring and touched with worldly ambition, still entertaining some of the pride and prejudices of their nation, we yet clearly and most satisfactorily discern the new nature, the Divine life operating in them. We see it in their docility, submission and loving obedience to Christ, in their self-denial and relinquishment of their own will, regarding the will of their Lord as supreme, unquestionable, and as that with which they must so coincide as that it shall be their will.

How plain a lesson is here taught the Disciple of Jesus, and every Congregation of true Christians. It shows us that Jesus is the good Shepherd of the sheep, who came "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." It illustrates the truth that "the sheep follow Him : for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow ; but will flee from him ; for they know not the voice of strangers." No remaining weakness or carnality within, no Judas or enemy without, however able and plausible, no secret and no open foe shall ever be able to separate them from the love of Christ. Individually and collectively they are safe. Every child of God and the whole Church will be preserved, disciplined, corrected, chastened, and purified unto life eternal. "Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

After Jesus had sent away the twelve, he persuaded the crowds to retire. That they did not go far away is seen by their returning to "the place, where they did eat bread," on the following morning.† One great object, which the Son of God had in view in seeking solitude, was to commune with His Father. Though without sin, He knew that He must bear the sins of many, and be numbered with transgressors. He was aware of the temptations with which He would be assailed, and He felt the frailty of His human nature. His holiness and love of the Father also caused Him to long for communion with His God. Accordingly we read, "And, when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray : and, when the evening was come, He was there alone." (v. 23). Here again is a most important lesson most impressively taught. Here, O Christian, here, O Minister of Christ, here, O ye who are pressed with the multiplicity of business and the multitude of engagements, is the example of Christ for you. Much as He valued society and loved the souls of men, and was intent upon continually doing good, we yet behold Him insisting upon being left alone for a season that His spirit might be refreshed and invigorated

* Luke 12, 32.

† See John 6, 42, &c.

by intercourse with God. Observe it is the duty of *secret* prayer that is here exhibited and taught. No public devotion, no religious zeal, no pious activity in promoting good can compensate for this essential element of spiritual life and prosperity. The more we may be occupied by these, the more need have we to secure time for reflection, meditation, and closet communion. None can plead justifiably the calls of business, not even the necessities of perishing sinners who need to have the Gospel preached to them, as a reason for omitting and neglecting secret converse with our Heavenly Father. Who can be compared with the Redeemer of men as to the crowds of immortal beings that repaired to Him, and the engrossing subjects of attention by which He was continually solicited? And yet how frequently do we read of Him betaking Himself to some place of solitude, and there pouring out His soul unto God. How brightly do we see this image of Christ reflected in His most eminent followers! How beautifully may we see it embodied in the practice of the busiest of men and chiefest of the ministers of the Saviour! The beloved physician in detailing the voyages and travels of St. Paul mentions that, after leaving Troas, "we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. And, when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene."* There is every reason to believe that Paul in "minding himself to go afoot" was walking in the footsteps, imitating the example of his blessed Master in thus seeking opportunity for devout contemplation and secret communion with God. If this practice be neglected, the grace of the Christian character in the believer will droop and be almost ready to die. It cannot be absolutely unknown to any real Christian, and that Christian, who has attained to most of this spirit, is the greatest in the Kingdom of God. This hallowing communion has often been most sweetly experienced by some babe in Christ, some beginner in godliness, loving much, fervently calling upon God and making rapid progress towards perfection in the Divine life. And to

* Acts 20, 13, 14.

the mature, the contrite, the deeply humble believer, it is unspeakably precious. By such it is prized above all gifts and sublunary advantages. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father that is in secret; and thy Father, that seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."*

We saw that the Disciples set out from the place, where Jesus fed the multitude, for Bethsaida. Bethsaida was situated upon the Eastern shore of the Sea of Tiberias. But, while seeking to cross the creek or water that was interposed between where they had been and the place whither they wished to go, they were assailed by a sudden tempest. John says, "And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew." This hurricane caused them to steer for Capernaum on the Western shore of the Lake.

How affecting the circumstances of the poor boatmen, for "it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them." He was on the mountain, alone with God. Thither He had repaired after dismissing the multitude: "and, when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the Sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary." There were two periods to which the term evening might be applied among the Jews. From three in the afternoon till sunset was designated evening, and from sunset till dark was also styled evening. The Jewish night was divided into four watches, which at the time of the equinox particularly would divide thus;—the first from six to nine, the second from nine to twelve, the third from twelve to three, and the fourth from three to six in the morning. It was not till the last had begun that their Master proceeded to join the Disciples. For upwards of nine hours, during the greater part of which they had been contending with the stormy wind and the swelling waves, their little bark apparently ready every moment to be swallowed up in the depths of the tempestuous and troubled Sea. Had Jesus then forgotten them all that time? Had He, though at His command they had launched out into the deep, omitted to provide for their

* Matthew 6, 6.

safety? Or was He unable to help them? Had the storm been unforeseen by Him and taken Him by surprise? Or were His own devotional exercises on the mountain so engrossing that He had altogether lost sight of His faithful friends? To all these interrogatories you are ready to return the one encouraging reply, No. Had the faith of each of the humble seamen in the boat that was being tossed upon Galilee's angry Lake by the contrary wind, now freshened to a gale, been but so strong as fully to know Him in whom he believed as the promised Messiah, how beautifully might he have sung in the hallowing strains of Israel's inspired and regal minstrel, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, that made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He, that keepeth thee, will not slumber. Behold, He, that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy Keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night."* "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: He maketh lightnings for the rain: He bringeth the wind out of His treasures."†

Let the believer then, let the Christian mariner, when "in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves," remember that his Saviour is Jehovah, and that the Man Christ Jesus is "Immanuel, Lord with us." He never for a moment ceases to remember every contrite sinner, every broken-hearted, self-abased follower. Did the high-priest of Israel wear and bear upon his breast-plate, when he went into the Holy of Holies, the names of the twelve tribes? Our great High Priest has inscribed upon the fleshly tables of His heart the name and the temporal and eternal welfare of each humbled, blood-washed, Spirit-quickened disciple. For every such one He is the Advocate with the Father, for such He is "Jesus Christ the Righteous," for such He is "the Propitiation", infinitely adequate and acceptable for all sins.

* Psalm 121.

† Psalm 133, 7.

When the hearts of the tried attendants of Jesus were well-nigh sinking by reason of the increasing wind and foaming billows, and were, it may be, not only doubting, but on the verge of despair, O could they but have realized the compassionate supplications and the all-prevailing intercessions that their Redeemer was then offering up for them that their faith should not fail, that they might become thoroughly spiritual, that they were not of the world even as He was not of the world, that they were His ransomed children, that they might be kept unto life everlasting! how would they have admired and loved and adored Him who loved them and gave Himself for them! How manifestly would they afterwards perceive, and how perspicuously may every Christian here perceive that the path of duty is the path of safety, that, if the mandate of the Master be given at even to go to sea immediately, to the eye of sense, at the risk of life and in opposition to some favourite scheme, some cherished purpose, it is our most solemn obligation, our highest wisdom, our certain happiness to obey. And let every intelligent mind here observe that, if we be the children of God, if we be born from Above, if the root of the matter, the essence of the Divine life be in us, we will feel constrained by the love, without which there is no life, no regeneration, no adoption, by the love which is implanted in every member of Christ, by this love of Christ, the principle which actuated and guided and kept from deadly error the first Disciples, we will feel constrained to obey, to comply, to do our Lord's bidding, to render unto Him the glory that is due unto His Name.

And, O Christian brethren, let us not leave or pass from this stage of the narrative without taking on a deepened, holier, and more influential conviction than we have heretofore attained of the importance of cultivating communion with God. Do we aspire, do we hope to be for ever with the Lord? Shall we in the Celestial Sanctuary be ever praising Him? Will it be our chiefest delight, as it will be our highest honour, to commune with God, to ascribe praise and dominion and blessing to Him for ever and ever? O then let us even in this point of view feel the necessity of preparing by cultivating the habits and exercises and privileges

which even now pertain to the Body of Christ, and which the example of our Divine Head so impressively inculcates.

It is the unalterable law of the Kingdom of grace that "the just shall live by his faith." "I will stand," says the prophet, "upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." The instruction of the Man of God is applicable in every time of darkness and difficulty that may come upon the children of God, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."* In effect the dealing of our Lord with the Apostles in the instance before us enjoins the same truth. It may be that now, "in the midst of the Sea," when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, which would bring them somewhere about the middle of the Lake, they were ready to cry with the Psalmist, "But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: Thou art my help and my Deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying."† But deliverance and comfort were nigh at hand. For we are told, "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the Sea. And, when the Disciples saw Him walking on the Sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out (cried aloud) for fear."

Here was a striking and an unprecedented miracle. Job says of God that He "alone spreadeth out the heavens and treadeth upon the waves of the sea."‡ Yet by the light, which is almost always in some degree present on the water, and by the light of the moon now probably in her last quarter and so visible at that hour, it being as estimated about three weeks before the celebration of the Passover, they saw a person in human form walking upon the surface of the agitated waters. What was the more remarkable as a trial of their faith, Jesus seemed determined to pass them. Fol-

* Habakkuk 2, 1, &c.

† Psalm 70, 5.

‡ Job 9, 8.

lowing the popular belief in apparitions, the Disciples "supposed it had been a spirit and cried out. For they all saw Him and were troubled." How relieved and joyful must they have been to hear the voice of their Master, the voice of their Beloved, the Author of everlasting consolation; "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

Delighted beyond measure with this manifestation of the personal presence of his Lord, Peter with characteristic ardour and forwardness answered, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water." There is in this incident something to blame, but there is also that which is good. There is a want of reflection, an undue putting of himself forward, a slighting of his brethren, egotistical confidence, and a desire of miraculous display when that was unnecessary. On the other hand there is deference to the authority of Jesus and an implied testimony that without His permission and warrant he ought not to attempt walking on the water and could not be successful in doing so. He evinces bold and confiding faith in the power, goodness, and wisdom of his Master.

To the request of the Apostle Jesus replied by granting it. "And He said, Come." Nor did Peter hesitate for a moment, but at once descended from the ship, "and walked on the water to go to Jesus." Let us now mark where this believer failed. So long as he looked to Jesus and confided implicitly upon Him, he was safe and continued to walk upon the Sea. The tempest was raging, the billows were dashing, the fierce wind set in commotion all the elements of nature, the Sea was roaring and the fulness thereof, yet the Disciple of Jesus was sustained and went upon the Sea as though he had been walking on the high-way of the quiet land. It was only when he began to look away from his Divine Protector, whose miraculous gift had caused the water to support his body, that the Apostle began to sink, "But, when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and, beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me."

In this weakness of the faith of Peter we may behold a picture of the failings of the faith of any believer. The Disci-

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ple began to sink immediately on looking merely to sensible things and calculating his risk from the surges of the perilous deep. So long as his Master's word and power and all-sufficiency were present and prominent before his mental vision, all was prosperous. But, as soon as he began to speculate about the terrific aspect of the mountain billows, and the dangers of the sea-storm to himself, he at once began to go down. Why had he not considered all these, before he with undue self-confidence requested permission to go to Jesus on the water? It is the will of Christ that all should count the cost of being His Disciples before they avow themselves His. When His service is entered upon after such deliberation, there will be more unfaltering decision and more entire devotedness in proportion to the justice with which the whole case has been weighed. And, as this is essential at the beginning of the Christian course, so is it of vastest moment in all the subsequent stages. Let the faith of the follower of Jesus be enlightened, deliberate, humble, and we may expect it to be sustained, vigorous, and consistent. Let the Christian always by faith look to Jesus. He, O ransomed sinner, is thy Lord, worship Him. Trust Him at all times. Then may the children of Zion sing, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."*

Even amidst the sins of God's people there is that which will show us that "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."† There will always be that which shows the renewed soul is one with the Saviour. Peter instinctively as a new creature, in the moment of sinking, cries to his Lord. Here then is faith amidst all his weakness and looking to things sensible. He does not attempt to save himself by his skill in swimming, an art in which, as a fisherman,

* Psalm 46, 1.

† John 3, 9.

he likely excelled; beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "Lord, help me." The prayer is instantly heard and as instantly answered, "And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

From first to last the whole narrative should be felt as a powerful incentive to prayer. Prayer is the best evidence of spiritual life in the soul. Where it is utterly neglected, the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins: where in the spirit of godly simplicity and earnestness it forms an exercise of the soul, undoubtedly the contrite suppliant is entitled to say, "Christ in me, the hope of glory. Christ is my life. To me to live is Christ."

Nor is it essential that the prayer should embody many words. One of the most effective prayers ever breathed was expressed in the simple words, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Behold also in the case of the Apostle a prayer of the broken spirit, equally successful, employing still fewer words. It is the shortest prayer on record. And no prayer was ever more promptly answered. "Lord, save me" is the prayer, "And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him," is the answer. What trembling sinner, what mariner ready to sink, may not, relying upon that Saviour, who is able and willing to save to the uttermost, present a similar petition? O let such, like Peter, love the Lord and follow Him. Then will He be ever a very present help in the time of need.

Let us imitate a still higher and holier example than that of the Apostle. Let us be followers of the Man Christ Jesus who, "when He had sent the multitudes away, went up into a mountain apart to pray." In this solemn occupation He passed the evening, midnight, and early morning hours. He did so when the world smiled upon Him and pressed Him with its honours and approbation. He retired from the company of the world that He might be so engaged. In such exercise He was wont to spend many an hour of sacred solitude during the silence of night, and when none was present with Him but His Father. What a model for us to study! O let us habitually endeavour to follow the Lord in this bright ex-

emplification of soul, body, and spirit being perfectly consecrated to God.

Let us pray

We again draw nigh unto Thee, Heavenly Father, with the profoundest reverence in the Name of Thy Blessed Son. We would come with a true heart in the full assurance of faith. With Thee, Lord, is the residue of the Spirit. O shower down upon us His blissful influences. Pour out of His Divine fulness.

Lord, teach us to pray. Give us the contrite spirit which will enable us to offer a sacrifice well pleasing in Thy sight. May we be truly humbled. May the love of Christ constrain us. Let this holy affection operate as a principle in our souls. May our wills be sincerely submissive to Him, whom we call Master and Lord, And, while we love *Him* with all our heart, may we also love our brethren, so as to look not every man at his own things, but every man also at the things of others. In honour may we yield the preference cordially to each other. Destroy in us all pride, selfishness, and carnal forwardness. Make us to be truly "poor in spirit" and "meek."

May we be confirmed in the faith of Christ. May the truth be so manifested to our consciences as that we shall be led anew and with deeper feelings and convictions to worship the Son of God.

Add daily, God of all grace, to the number of believers. Especially we beseech Thee to advance the work of spiritual renovation in the hearts of seamen. As a class, O cause them, Almighty and Most Merciful Father, to remember and turn unto the Lord. Attach them by the love of Christ. Discover to them clearly the deformity of sin, and the beauty of holiness. Bless masters, officers, and men. Bless those who direct the voyager where he shall call and whither he shall go.

May "holiness to the Lord" be inscribed upon the merchandise and the practices of all connected with our shipping. While our merchants seek to advance their honest gains, may they, and all subordinate to them, strive to glorify Thee in

the promotion of Christ's kingdom upon earth. Bless our rulers. Bless our fellow-subjects, and all our brethren of mankind. And finally receive us to Thy glory through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 25, 6.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

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THIRTEENTH SUNDAY.

Let us worship God by singing to His praise in Psalm 95, 1.

Let us pray.

Almighty and Most Merciful Father, we would now draw nigh unto Thee in the exercises of supplication and thanksgiving. Enable us, we beseech Thee, to worship aright, in spirit and in truth. Pour down upon us of the Spirit of truth and love and holiness. With Thee is the residue of the Spirit. May we be quickened and led by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Grant unto us, Holy Father, the happiness of Thy children who have received the Spirit of adoption and who cry unto Thee, Abba, Father.

We rejoice this day in Him who came in the name of the Lord to save us. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift. Oh ! may each of us be taught intelligently and devoutly to say with Thy servant of old, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." We believe that there is not another name, given under Heaven among men by which we must be saved, but the name of Jesus. Oh ! may we savingly believe in Him as "delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification."

May we feel and be constrained by the love of Christ to live not to ourselves but to Him who died for us and arose again. Let this love be a genuine principle of conduct in us. May it be truly in us without dissimulation. May we by Thy grace abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good. We ought to know that it is an evil and bitter thing, that we have sinned against the Lord our God. And we

ought to abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes. That we may do so, oh ! be pleased this day to show us the glory of Thy mercy and loving-kindness in the face of Thine Anointed Son. Henceforward may we walk before Thee in newness of life. Verily the time past is sufficient to have wrought the will of the Gentiles. May the days that may remain to us of the voyage of life be consecrated to God. May our repentance be profound and of that godly sort that needeth not to be repented of.

Bless to us, Almighty God, Thy Holy Word and Ordinances. We triumph in Him whose resurrection is commemorated in the blessed institution of the Christian Sabbath. We would remember the Lord's Day to keep it holy. We praise Thee for the miracles of benevolence, for the love and care that we ever behold in our Blessed Redeemer, both before and after His resurrection. When called upon this day to meditate upon such enlivening and sanctifying truths, oh ! may the Spirit of the risen Saviour make them so to us. May we henceforth pursue our honest calling in the love and fear of God, looking and waiting for the second coming of Christ. We praise Thy great name for the hopes of a blessed resurrection after death. We are assured in Thy Word of the hour when the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and when all that sleep in their graves shall come forth at the voice of the Archangel. Oh ! prepare us for the dread and sublime summons. When this mortal shall put on immortality, may we know in our happy experience that this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and that we are made like unto our living Head whom we shall see face to face.

We pray earnestly for Thy rich blessing and favour to descend upon all our fellow-worshippers. Be especially gracious to all connected with the sea. May many who "go down to the sea in ships" be found who worship Thee in the spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. Bless Thy Ministering servants and all who seek to win and edify souls. May they have a double portion of Thy Spirit and be doubly blessed in the growth of grace in their own souls and in the everlasting good of which Thou wilt honour them to be the instruments to others. Bless every Christian labourer and every Christian

enterprise. Bless our ship's company, our commander, officers and men in their several places and relations, with the richest blessings for time and eternity. Bless us individually at this time. In waiting upon Thee may our happy experience be, that it is no vain thing to seek the Lord. May Thy Word be to us the word of life everlasting. Prosper us with favourable weather if it be Thy holy will, and with all spiritual and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus. Bless all whom we especially love, to whom we are united in the ties of affection and kindred. May our families be blessed and guarded by Thee. Bless them in the things that are temporal and also in those that are eternal. And the glory shall be ascribed unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 130, 3.

Read 1st Corinthians, Chap. 3.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in John XXI, 1—14.

Repeatedly had Jesus, previous to the time referred to in our text, shown Himself alive to individuals and companies of His Disciples. He had on the evening of the day, upon which He arose, come into the midst of the assembled Apostles. On that occasion Thomas was absent, and remained sceptical and staggered even after being informed by his brethren that they had seen the Lord. Happily Thomas

did not absent himself from the fellowship of the Apostles on the succeeding Lord's Day. The affecting and overwhelming evidence, which the doubting Disciple then received, of the love, omniscience, and resurrection of his Master, was such as to subdue and melt him. Deeply humbled, with new faith, love, and devotion Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

"After these things," says the inspired historian, "Jesus showed Himself again to the Disciples at the Sea of Tiberias." This visit occurred between the second appearing of Christ to His congregated followers on the First Day of the week and that promised discovery of Himself upon a mountain in Galilee for which they were waiting.

While looking with longing expectation for the time of this interview, the Disciples did not hesitate to engage in those avocations by means of which they could procure for themselves, and those dependent on them, an honest maintenance. During the personal ministry of their Lord upon earth, they were probably sustained for the most part by those who ministered of their temporal good things unto their Master. From the day upon which Peter and his associates had been favoured with the miraculous draught of fishes, when the future Apostle, profoundly conscious of the glory of Christ and of his own guilt, exclaimed, not knowing well what he said, but intimating to the unerring, omniscient, and compassionate Saviour, a state of mind most humble and acceptable, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" to whom Jesus replied, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." From that day up to the period specified in our text, we have no account of Simon and his friends following the occupations of the fisherman. In reference to the former we read,—“And, when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all and followed Him.”* But now, when they were being separated from the bodily presence of Jesus, when they were entering upon that experience foretold by Him, when the Bridegroom should be taken from them, it was necessary that they should have recourse to that method

* See Luke 5.

which in Providence was within their power for securing their livelihood as men of integrity. How apt and willing they were to pursue this course, the text affords a specimen. These followers of Jesus present the most perfect contrast to those who from empty pride, contemptible vanity, debasing love of idleness, or unprincipled imposition upon others, will not earn for themselves by honourable labour, where that is practicable, an adequate subsistence. The Christians before us were men of an opposite stamp, they would "with quietness work and eat their own bread." Like the young prophets who were encouraged by Elisha to remove to an enlarged locality and secure there an improved residence by means of their own industry,* and like the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose hands often ministered to his necessities by working at his craft, so also did these ministers of Christ with cheerfulness and alacrity betake themselves to a calling with which they were familiar, and where their hardy energy and intelligent skill would be blessed to them for all things needful and good.

"There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee and two other of His Disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately, and that night they caught nothing."

What a beautiful picture have we here represented to us ! How amiable do these good men appear in their companionship. Let us draw near and scrutinize them a little. First, we have Simon Peter. We always think of him as an old and a well known friend. He is the leader of the little company, and the proposer of the intended fishing-trip. The next named is Thomas, called Didymus, recently so full of doubt and so painfully resolute in his unbelief that his Lord after saying to him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side," added, "and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas is now, however, one of this interesting group, which affords us a fine exemplification of the fellowship of saints, and which may well cause us to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Behold

* 2 Kings 6, 1.

how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !”* Yes. Thomas is no longer an absentee from the society of the Disciples. He is now in spirit and in presence, avowedly and in heart, one of them. We come then to “Nathanael of Cana in Galilee,” the type of simplicity and godly sincerity, of secret communion with God, and of the public reward with which such unostentatious devotion is rewarded. What progress do we discern in this prayerful and candid enquirer, since that first coming to Jesus of Nazareth, of which we read in the 1st of John ! That coming was indeed an era in his history of brightest omen. How advanced now, as compared with what he then was, in the faith of Christ ? To the pious and energetic friend, who first informed him of Messiah, he replied, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth ?” How wise, how felicitous, how instructive the answer ! “Philip saith unto him, Come and see.” He did come, he had the secrets of his heart revealed to him by the Omniscient, and now we see him the confirmed believer, the advanced Disciple, the favoured witness of the risen Saviour. The sons of Zebedee, we know, were James and John, the intimate friends of Peter and along with him the most highly favoured Disciples of Jesus. While capable of the most deeply-seated love to Jesus, they were also so distinguished for their fearless ardour and zeal that their Master designated them, “Boanerges, sons of thunder.” The “two other of His Disciples” that yet remain are supposed to have been Philip and Andrew, both of Bethsaida near the Sea of Tiberias. Andrew first brought his brother Simon to Christ, and it was Philip who persuaded Nathanael to come and see whether Jesus were He “of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets, did write.” Thus were they both spiritual fathers and in Christ before some of the loved brethren with whom they were now associated.

Such was the circle of select and dearest friends of whom we here read. When Peter declared his intention to “go a-fishing,” the whole of the little band resolved to join him in his enterprize. Their number seven has been noted in con-

* Psalm 133, 4.

nection with the Roman law requiring *seven* witnesses to a testament. They were to be unitedly and individually witnesses of the Death and Resurrection of their Lord.

We may learn from the arrangements of those Disciples that it is good and edifying that Christians should choose and prefer each other's society, not only in the exercises of the congregation; but also in the ordinary and secular business of life. Certainly they ought to possess more of that uprightness and diligence, without which none needs expect to prosper, than others. And certainly they have most reason to look for the blessing which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow, when they for Christ's sake unite in pursuing their calling, preferring each other's fellowship to that of the worldling who hates Christ and His Religion. And, if they may prosper more in the things that are of this world by such connection, much rather may we suppose that in their Christian principles, comfort, and growth in grace, they will be benefited by such choice and preference. Let the Disciples of Christ, who would walk in His Spirit, and as followers of them who are now through faith and patience inheriting the promises, remember that they are required to aim at this. The good king Hezekiah was severely reproved by the prophet for violating this duty of the believer. "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord."* The disregard or setting aside of this law of the Divine life may arise from timidity, the relish for carnal pleasure, the adoption of current views and practices, a desire not to offend or to be singular, the idea of both effecting worldly gain and sufficiently maintaining fidelity to Christ at the same time, or from any similar motive. But that Christian is indeed a very poor one, who fancies that "the offence of the Cross is ceased," or that he has discovered how he can both serve Christ and conform to the world, or who supposes that by conceding to the spirit of the world in some small matters he will not be accounted stiff or too particular. No, brethren; none ever yet succeeded in such an attempt, though many, many have made it. The world is too sharp for such.

The world will not give them the credit for which they hope. It does not allow them to be actuated by even sincere good intentions as to the things of Christ, but regard them with contempt except in so far as they serve the worldling's purpose.

We ask then all humble, simple-minded, earnest Christians to seek Christian fellowship, as much as possible, in things secular as well as in things sacred. And they may rest assured that they will be more likely to be successful in both. We would ask fishers and all connected with fishing to do this. We would not then have the violations of the Sabbath or the substitution of the worship of Mammon on that Holy Day which, alas! is now too common in this business, and which undoubtedly draws down the curse of the God of Holiness upon those who refuse to 'remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.' And we would ask seamen and masters, and all connected with the sea, to strive earnestly to imbibe the beautiful spirit so beautifully set forth in the text, and to aim at it, in the selection of the ship's company and in the choice of companions. There are facilities in the present day afforded for the attainment of this object which may well encourage the hopes of the Christian seaman. And we despair not of the most wonderful improvement in the character of those who compose the officers and men of our Marine. Surely God in His Providence and by His gracious Spirit is able to accomplish all this. Why then should we despair? How soon may the fishermen and the seamen become living witnesses for Christ and living epistles of Christ in every port and on every sea. Let us pray for such a beatific result, and let our prayer be that of faith, importunity, and affection.

Seldom or never is honest industry unrewarded with some degree of success. Unlike the gambler, the fraudulent, the unsteady, and the profligate, who may in the commencement or for a time seem to prosper, those who dutifully and perseveringly ply those labours, to which in Providence they are called, will be sure to succeed, in some measure at least. The children of God have the promises of His Covenant for the blessings of time, as well as those of eternity. The

widow may be reduced to "a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse;" but "the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."* Or the prophet's widow may be in great distress because "the creditor is come to take unto him her two sons to be bondmen. But she shall go by Elisha's directions and borrow of her neighbours empty vessels not a few. And she shall pour out from her pot of oil, the only property that now remains to her, and the oil shall miraculously be so multiplied that she shall go, according to the benevolent prophet's injunction, and sell the oil and pay her debt, and live, she and her children, of the rest."† So we shall find in the case of the Disciples of whom we read, "They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately, and that night they caught nothing. But, when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the Disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered Him, No. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." (v. 3, 6).

Thus may we again perceive the verification of the Apostolical statement that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."‡ Let us not fail to remember that all suitable temporal good, all earthly blessing, that are really good for them, are covenanted to the children of God. They are promised as well as spiritual, everlasting, and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus to the ransomed and sanctified followers of the Lamb. Surely the devoted disciple of Jesus may ever rejoice in the King of Zion. Prosperity and lack of success are alike at His disposal and under His control. He is "the Head over all things to the Church." Oh! that we may feel the weight of the argument to be assuredly Christ's. How

* 1 Kings 17.

† 2 Kings 4, 1.

‡ 1 Timothy 4, 8

happy are all those who by faith are fully His. They need not have recourse to the dishonest means of the children of this world in order to secure this world's good. They ought not to be unduly anxious with respect to their personal or relative necessities. Their Father knoweth that they have need of all these things. And He, who feeds the ravens and hears the young lions when they seek their meat from Him, and adorns the fields with beauty for man, will verily not fail to provide things sufficient for them. He has pledged Himself to do so. He has not left us even to infer it upon the strongest grounds. He has explicitly stated it. He has lovingly promised it in His Holy Word. Nothing can really injure a believer walking with God, and nothing good can be wanting. The language of Scripture to such an one is. "For all things are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."* Oh! strive then, beloved friends, to be Christians, Christians indeed, confirmed, undoubted Christians. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for, if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."†

Nor is it essential that the disciple must be eminent or strong in order to be warranted to look for a participation in all the love and goodness that enter into the Covenant of Redemption. Let any of us be but decidedly and heartily for Christ, and our gracious Saviour admits us to the felicity of His called, ransomed, chosen friends. So it may be said to have been with the delightful ship's company of our text. They had no doubt learned much, and were now established in the faith of Christ. Yet they had much to learn. The style of their Lord's address to them and His designation of them is worthy of consideration. They had toiled all night and had caught nothing. The grey light of morning was now dawning, and it does not appear that they had any supply of provisions, not even for a single meal. Yet were they not

* 1 Corinthians 3, 21, 23.

† 2 Peter 1, 10, 11.

daunted or down-cast. It is a well known fact that the most needy are often the least clamorous. We may witness it here. That these worthy men were needy no one doubts, that they had vigorously and perseveringly sought to supply themselves is evident; but they had not succeeded, no, not with all their best exertions. Shall they then give way to discontent, mourning, despair? Not a syllable of such a character do we hear from their lips. They trust in Divine Providence, and the God, whom they thus honour, will not fail to honour them. They had spent the night in fruitless efforts. Oh! that their Master were with them! they may have sighed. Former miraculous interpositions may have been thought of or mentioned. When the morning light began to appear, a seeming stranger stood on the shore, and with great kindness, and a power that impressed them with respect, enquired, "Children, have ye any meat?" What question could have been more pointed, more seasonable? Does this visitor indeed know their circumstances? Oh! brethren, was He not with them, though unseen, all night? "Children," He calls them. The word is remarkable. It is the same as that employed by John (1 Ep. 2, 12), "little children," a term of great affection and also implying that those addressed were but beginners in the Christian race.

Observe too the tractableness and docility of these good men. They replied to the question of the unknown speaker, "Have ye any meat?" any thing besides bread, any thing to be eaten with bread? "No." And He said unto them "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find." They immediately acquiesced. They did not proudly demand who He was that directed them, and how He had better knowledge than they. On the contrary they at once complied with His instructions, as those who were willing to be taught and told what was for their benefit. How wise and remunerative their humbleness of mind was, the event strikingly shows. "They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes."

Brethren, imitate these fishers in their exemplary spirit of persevering endeavour, trust, patience, hope, teachableness. And seek by faith to realize the presence of your Lord in the

night of fatiguing and seemingly fruitless work. It may be that of the trial of your principles. In the morning Jesus may stand on the shore. And the good conduct of those who have done and endured so well may be blessed to many besides themselves. Let the fishermen and the seamen especially try and turn what our text records to good account. When disaster or want may threaten, let them still hope in God. Oh! let them be persuaded, like the Galilean boatmen, to choose the one thing needful, and to prefer Christ to the pleasures of sin or the gains of ungodliness, and most assuredly may they rely upon His Providence and love for the things of the body as well as the things of the soul. He will be with them in the gales of prosperity and in the blasts of adversity, in the sunshine and in the storm, when surrounded by plenty or when pinched by want. Their Redeemer will make all work together for good to them.

John was the first to discover that the speaker was Jesus. Perhaps the miraculous draught of fishes caused him to think of his loved Lord. And, when he remembered the voice, we can hear him as it were exclaiming, "the voice of my Beloved!" John was the Disciple whom Jesus pre-eminently loved. And he in return most eminently loved Jesus. We find him alone of all the Apostles standing with the mother of Jesus at the Cross when the sword was piercing through her soul. Peter and John were most endeared friends. They answered admirably to each other. The one was the bolder and readier, the other the calmer and more meditative. They were most intimate and chosen associates. See them running together on the morning of the resurrection to the sepulchre, when told by Mary Magdalene that the body of Jesus was not there. Peter is the first to start, but the other, being younger and fleetier, is the first to arrive at the sepulchre; "yet went he not in," until Peter came up, "and went into the sepulchre. Then went in also that other Disciple."

The beloved Disciple knew what joy Peter would realize in the society of Christ. Peter had much forgiven and he loved much. Only observe the noble Apostle. So soon as he heard, "It is the Lord," he girded on his fisher's coat unto him, as he had only had on his inner garment while fishing, and with

his outer clothing, which may have been of the nature of oil-cloth, he swam to the shore, so overjoyed and delighted that he could not wait till the boat and fishes were brought to land." And the other Disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes."

Here Peter was right and they were right also. Both were accepted by the Lord and served good purposes. The fishes required to be taken care of and secured, and Jesus must be honoured by this fervour of love on the part of His truly excellent friend and repentant follower. Both grace and nature delight in variety.

It is of little moment, whether the "fire" mentioned was miraculously supplied, or in an ordinary and a natural way. "Bring of the fishes which ye have now caught," said the Lord to His apt Disciples, teaching them to use with cheerfulness and devout gratitude the bounties of Providence.

"The substance" of those diligent men was "precious." Account was taken of the number of fishes caught. There were "a hundred fifty and three, yet was not the net broken." The fishermen noted this that they might praise the Lord for His goodness, and it may be that they might effect an equable division of the gain. They then in obedience to the command of their Master participated in a full or principal meal, as the expression intimates.

How highly honoured were these good men by the company of Jesus! Converse, union, and communion with this exalted Saviour are man's highest dignity and felicity.

Our Lord afforded many more convincing and indubitable proofs of His resurrection. This was the third manifestation of Himself on the part of the risen Redeemer to the Disciples collectively. He was seen also of Mary Magdalene, Cephas, James, and the two Disciples going to Emmaus individually. This was to establish satisfactorily His resurrection. Let us rejoice in that glorious resurrection. Let us make sure of spiritual life from the glorified Messiah. He offers it to us freely in the Gospel. If we believe in Him, we shall also rise to the resurrection of eternal glory.

Let us sing Paraphrase 23, 12.

Let us pray.

"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth! Oh! how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!"

May the Record of the love and resurrection of our Blessed Redeemer be to our souls as manna from Heaven. Almighty God, may we with our heart believe unto righteousness upon Thy Only-begotten and Well-beloved Son. May we know Him as 'the Bread of life.' May we have life in Him. May the life that henceforth we shall live in the flesh be that of faith in Jesus. May we love Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. From this day forward may our life be "hid with Christ in God." May we live to Him who died for us and rose again. We rejoice to be assured that, though ascended up on High and seated on the right hand of the Eternal Majesty, He is still the same loving and omnipotent and merciful Saviour. Oh! we would cleave to Him with full purpose of heart. Lord, begin and complete Thine own work of grace in us. Quicken, keep, and guide us. Strengthen our weakness. Either preserve us from temptation or sustain and deliver us when tempted. And finally bring us to the land of perfect safety and happiness.

May Thy Holy Word and Blessed Gospel have free course and be glorified. Bless all ends of the earth and those who are far off and those who are nigh upon the sea. Bless the fishers of men. May they be truly successors of the Apostles. May they possess the same holy, loving, meek, humble, spirit that actuated the fishermen of Galilee. Bless our country. We thank Thee for whatever glory she may have attained as Thine instrument for publishing the glad tidings of Salvation to the nations of the world. May our land be honoured with far more of such glory. And may her mariners be faithful

messengers of Christian truth and holiness. Bless our Queen and all under her and over us. Dismiss us now with Thy blessing, and accept of us in the Beloved. Amen.

Let us conclude the worship of God by singing in Psalm 96, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all." Amen.

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FOURTEENTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Psalm 46, 1.

Let us pray.

O Thou, who art the Arbiter of our destinies, with solemn reverence would we now draw nigh unto Thee, and worship at the footstool of Thy Throne. Thou art the God of the sea and of the dry land, the Only True and Living God. The children of men in their blindness have made to themselves gods many. Some of their gods have been imagined protectors of seamen and some of landmen. O Thou, who art God Thyself alone, we will hope in Thee. They have all been false gods, vanity and a lie. We are assured of this ; we lament the unhappy condition of their worshippers and those who put their trust in them. We would now with all our soul do homage to Thee, besides whom there is no god at all.

We come unto Thee in the Name of Jesus Christ, Thy Well-beloved Son, our Blessed Saviour. We come that we may confess and that we may forsake our sins. O grant us the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. May we feel His influences in godly contrition, humbleness of mind, earnest desires after Thee and Thy holiness, and a penitent turning away from all our sins.

We beseech Thee, Good Lord, to grant us saving faith. May it be both genuine and lively. We acknowledge that we have not always believed that Thou art and that Thou art the rewarder of them that diligently seek Thee. O may we now so believe in Thee as that our faith shall be well pleasing in Thy sight.

We desire this day devoutly to praise Thee for our Providential blessings and for all the Christian privileges which have been conferred upon us. We thank Thee for

whatever we truly know of Thee, the Only True God, and of Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. May the Spirit so enable us to know the Father and the Son as that we shall be partakers of life eternal.

We rejoice that we are this day in Thy kind Providence invited to meditate upon a portion of Thy Holy Word. How inestimable is the treasure contained in the precious truths of the Scriptures ! O may we be enabled to seek it for ourselves. May we find the Pearl of great price. May we know in our sanctified experience what it is to be concerned for our souls and for the one thing needful, what it is to be awakened, anxious, striving, and believing unto salvation. May we be justified from our accumulated guilt and sins by faith in Jesus ; realize the blessedness of peace with God through His peace-speaking blood. May the Spirit of holiness and joy rest upon us and dwell in us, making us meet to serve and glorify Thee in our body and in our spirit which are Thine.

But what are we, O Lord, and what is our father's house that we should thus ask ? Blessed be Thy Holy Name, we are not required to have any merit or desert that we may obtain all these unspeakable blessings. We are worthless heli-deserving sinners. But Thou hast encouraged us, the poor and the needy, seamen as well as more favoured inhabitants of Christian lands, to aspire after all this honour and felicity. O then let us not fail or come short through presumptuous unbelief. Dispel our darkness, remove our ignorance, cleanse us from our pollution, and make us strong in goodness by Thy mighty power and love in Jesus Christ. Bless, we beseech Thee, all our friends and brethren at sea or on shore, in sickness or in health. Bless all our fellow-worshippers upon this Thy Holy Day. Bless Thy servants who minister in holy things and preach the glorious Gospel of the Son of God. May their labours and prayers be accompanied with the saving power of the Holy Spirit. May vast multitudes be turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Bless the children of Zion, the loving followers of the Lamb. May they be joyful in their Redeemer and King. O for that blissful day when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the channel of the deep.

We pray that Thy richest blessings may descend upon our lawful sovereign, the Queen, her Majesty's Royal Consort, and all the members of the Royal Family. Bless all our governors, rulers and superiors. Bless especially all connected with this ship, those who are in authority and those who are under authority. May we all in our several places and relations serve the Lord Christ in the zealous, faithful, and conscientious discharge of every duty. Be with us to bless us with grace, mercy, and peace, while engaged in solemn exercises. And to Thee, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory now and ever. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing Psalm 66, 5.

Read Acts 27.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Acts XXVII., 1.

As the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul was not only abundant in labour, but also a most indefatigable traveller. Many of his journeys by land and his voyages by sea are briefly recorded by Luke, his faithful friend, who was associated with him in many of them. When tarrying at Troas on the shore of the Egean Sea, Paul saw the vision and heard the cry of the Macedonian, soliciting him to render help to the European

Gentiles. Immediately the great Apostle crossed the Sea to Samothracia, then to Neapolis and Philippi. In this and his subsequent journey, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, he was accompanied by Luke.

From Philippi Paul passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, thence to Berea; after which he visited Athens. His next landing-place, so to speak, was Corinth. Here he tarried for more than a year and a half, preaching the Gospel with great success. From Corinth he sailed into Syria and came to Ephesus. From Ephesus he sailed to Caesarea. He next went down to Antioch. "And, after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples."

After a stay of three months in Greece, the Apostle returned into Asia. Taking ship at Philippi, Luke and he met some friends at Troas. From Troas he went *alone, by land*, to Assos on the Asiatic sea coast while his friends *sailed*. This was Paul's own arrangement, he "minding himself to go a-foot." We can easily suppose that retirement and devotion were the reasons that caused him to adopt this course. The hint thus furnished to the Christian is very important. After joining his company, Paul, not wishing to stop at Ephesus, sailed to Miletus, a city thirty miles further to the South. To Miletus the elders of the church of Ephesus went to meet the Apostle, who there delivered the admirable address recorded in the 20th of the Acts. From Miletus he proceeded to Tyre, where "the ship was to unlade her burden," calling at various places by the way. The Apostle's visit to the disciples at Tyre was most interesting and impressive. On his way to Jerusalem whither he was bound, he touched at Ptolemais, and tarried at Caesarea "many days."

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the uproar created by the Jews in Jerusalem against Paul. By means of the interposition of Lysias the Roman tribune, he was rescued from their deadly malice and violence, and conveyed to Caesarea, where Felix, the Roman governor, resided. Ultimately, after having been before and preached the Gospel to Felix, Festus and

King Agrippa with many others, Paul, having appealed unto Caesar, was sent to Rome from Caesarea. He had long been anxious to see the Christians of Rome, and his prayer was that he might have a prosperous journey thither. That his visit to Rome, though a prisoner, proved a spiritually prosperous one, the last two chapters of the Acts abundantly prove. That his prayer was answered, though not as he might have anticipated, is equally clear.

Even this brief review of a part of the Apostolic career of Paul may enable us in some measure the better to appreciate what he declares of his experience. "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."*

The style of St. Luke is well known as that of an accurate and elegant writer. In recording the sea journeys of St. Paul, however, and especially his voyage to Rome, as found in the Chapters before us, while we have the most satisfactory evidence that the narrative was written by one who was himself a fellow-passenger with the Apostle on board the different vessels referred to, and well competent to report the incidents of the voyage, it is also established that the historian was not a nautical person. This has been shown by the Christian critic from the absence of those sea-terms which a professional sailor would not omit to employ; the language is correct, but the phraseology is not that of a mariner. It is precisely such as an educated Christian and a superior traveller might be expected to use. Instances of similar relative expressions in connection with sailing and a ship have been (I believe) lately adduced from the correspondence of a navy surgeon, by a very accomplished writer.† This furnishes

* 2 Corinthians 11, 25, &c.

† Mr. Smith.

a very pleasing and curious testimony, apart from its inspiration, on behalf of the authenticity and perfectly trust-worthy nature of the account of the interesting voyage now before us. An actual examination of the localities and the relation of the Evangelist has enabled a highly accomplished writer to trace the voyage "almost as minutely as if he had had the log-book of the 'ship of Alexandria' before him. Not a point is left unexamined, not a difficulty unsolved." The whole course has been perspicuously and instructively traced with great ability and success.

It is our purpose merely to take a cursory glance at the circumstances and occurrences of this celebrated voyage. We shall dwell briefly on some of those great lessons which are interspersed in the earnest hope that our rapid review and reflections may be productive of spiritual good. Throughout we shall find that Paul is really the principal person on board. Though only a passenger, though a chained prisoner, his presence and influence are always manifest. That he proved the instrument of endless blessings to many of his fellow-voyagers, of the seamen and of the soldiers, of the passengers who believed in Christ and of those who knew Him not, we may humbly trust. That the centurion especially was benefited in the salvation of his soul through the crucified Redeemer, whom Paul preached, will appear highly probable.

What a treasure are the company and zealous exertions for good of a consecrated disciple of Christ! Every member of the mystical body should ceaselessly aim at the highest benefit of those with whom he may be, though but for a time, associated. The Minister of the Gospel of the Son of God should particularly labour with love, ardency, prayer, and steady continuance, for the souls of those with whom he may sail in some ship, and the souls of all whom he can reach who are sailing the voyage of mortal life on life's troubled sea to the land of eternity. Let every voyager, whatever be his position, whether that of a seaman or that of a passenger, be awed and awakened to solemn thought and desire for holiness by the voice of Providence, the goodness of God, and

the obligations under which all are laid to repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

From the impression made upon the mind of Agrippa by the defence of Paul, the King appears to have regretted that the Apostle's appeal to the Emperor rendered it impossible to set him at liberty, which he felt much disposed to do. The result of his conference with Festus was that Paul should be sent to Rome. We are told accordingly that he and certain other prisoners were committed to the charge of a centurion named Julius, belonging to the Emperor's own cohort, v. 1.

There was at Caesarea a ship of Adramyttium, a city of Mysia. By this ship on her return to her own port the company were to proceed that far on their way. At Adramyttium (the modern name) Julius believed that he would be able to get another vessel by which he could proceed to Rome. Mysia is not far from Pergamos, where was one of the candlesticks of the Revelation. The voyage was intended to be a coasting one along the shores of Asia Minor. There was then no mariner's compass known, by which the navigator could safely steer his way, however distant from land. Stern necessity alone ever induced a vessel to go out into the open sea and lose sight of land.

Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, is named as one of Paul's fellow-voyagers. He is repeatedly mentioned as a companion of the Apostle and accompanying him. Like Luke, he appears to have had the greatest affection and esteem for Paul.* The Apostle designates him his "fellow-prisoner." If, as we suppose, he was voluntarily so, his love and regard would be very highly prized by Paul. We thus see in the friends who accompanied him, and even in the highly honourable centurion with whom he had to deal, good tokens fitted to encourage the prisoner of the Lord. At v. 3 we read that after leaving Caesarea the vessel on the following day "touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself." Thus from the beginning we see the consideration and the obliging and kindly demeanour of the Roman

* See Acts 19, 29 : 20, 4 : Colossians 4, 10 : Philemon v. 24.

officer tow: this heroical servant of Jesus Christ. Already may Julius have conceived an extraordinary respect for this most remarkable man. How much he now knew of his religion and history we are not informed. But in all his intercourse we discover the affable, educated, dignified, and generous man. Surely He, who forgets not the cup of cold water to the humblest disciple, will not fail to reward this excellent soldier for his kindness to the Apostle.

Had the wind favoured, the ship would have at once sailed to Myra by a direct course, keeping outside or west of the island of Cyprus. But, "the winds being contrary," she sailed between Cyprus and the Asiatic continent, and afterwards westward, passing Pamphylia and Cilicia, till she reached Myra, a city of Lycia. "And there the centurion" (says the historian) found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein." (v. 6.) This ship was probably in the corn trade between Alexandria and Rome. From the former place large quantities of grain were shipped for the latter. Alexandria was then the chief city of Egypt. Thence was exported to Italy, which furnished a great market, East Indian and Persian goods as well as corn of Egypt. From Alexandria the ship proceeded to the harbour of Fair Havens in the island of Crete, which, owing to the contrary winds, they only reached after considerable difficulty.

We read that Paul while at Fair Havens, addressed the whole company as to the propriety of wintering there. He had had no little experience in the business of the sea. In this respect, and as a man of God, his opinion ought to have had great weight. "Sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past." This refers to the season of Expiation, which occurred about the end of September or beginning of October. The fast spoken of was that of Tisri, mentioned in Leviticus 16, 29: 23, 27: Numbers 39, 7. After that time favourable weather was not to be expected by the maritime traveller. There had been longer detention than had been expected. Navigation in the Egean Sea is understood to be alarming and hazardous even to modern shipping after the "Michaelmas flows," which take place in November.

We find that the owner of the vessel was on board. He would act in the capacity of supercargo. This with other circumstances will show that the ship was a large one. In small vessels the same individual would likely act both as master and supercargo. The duties of a ship-master of that day appear to have been similar to those required in our own times. The ancient commander must have possessed considerable knowledge of astronomy. He sometimes guided his ship by the constellations.

Though the Centurion and others had a respect for Paul, they would not act upon his counsel. Perhaps they thought him a dreaming enthusiast! The Romans treated Christianity with contempt and would not investigate its claims. We read that "the centurion believed the master and owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul." If Paul spoke by inspiration and made them aware by what authority he admonished, the preference of the centurion is just an instance of worldly wisdom. He trusts in an arm of flesh, and will not exercise faith in God." As a man of shrewdness and calculation he thought that there was no comparison between the value of Paul's advice and that of the master and owner of the ship. Here however, as in many other cases, "God taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

The advantages of Phoenice over Fair Havens as a port to winter in caused it to be sought after. Probably it was better protected from the South-west wind (the wind most dreaded) than Fair Havens. Whether Phoenice would answer to the modern Latro, it is of little consequence for us here to enquire. It will answer our purpose to know that it was a preferable harbour in the same island of Crete, distant from Fair Havens about fifty miles. Favoured by the gentle breeze from the South, our voyagers set sail, coasting along the shores of Crete, in hopes of speedily gaining the desired haven.

What an incalculable blessing to the mariner or the fisherman is a good harbour! The numerous inlets and refuges, with which the coasts and islands of many countries are supplied, present a striking instance of the wisdom and benevolence of the God of nature. And how admirable the power of this great

First Cause as seen in the intelligence and means which He has bestowed upon the children of men, by which they can form harbours where they can scarcely be said to exist, and improve them where they do ! Of how little advantage would the sea be to commerce, destitute of safe and commodious havens ! The Sea, Gulf, or Bay, that might possess exhaustless riches in its finny inhabitants or in the resources of the land which its waters lave, would yet be comparatively valueless if destitute of creeks and places of shelter for the storm-endangered seaman or fisher.

At verse 13 we read, "And, when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete." We have here almost a picture of human life, with its hopes and fears, the former impelling to exertion. The mariner well knows the inconstancy and variability of the wind, yet, wishing to gain another port, he almost believes that the breeze, which now is fair, will remain with him, and that he will surely succeed. At all events he will risk it. The landsman acts in his affairs in a similar manner. All this is right, when properly regulated under the influence of godly principle. It is the will of the Supreme Ruler and Arbiter that thus it should be. In this way the business of this passing, transitory world is propelled and ensured of accomplishment. And, if man, if the voyager through life, will but live godly in Christ Jesus, all will be well. Traveller to eternity, seek, O seek first salvation through the blood and righteousness of the Saviour of mankind. Make your calling and election sure. Be reconciled, in harmony—right with God, through the finished work and all-prevailing intercession of His Son. This is the one thing needful. Then follow the leading of Providence and be refreshed with every good token which may present itself. Such will not fail to attend vigilance, the courageous and skilful discharge of duty, and devout submission to the Divine will.

The gallant ship had left "Fair Havens" with the hope-inspiring South wind. But, alas ! how soon is the clear sky overcast ! How soon is the welcome breeze supplanted by the terrific hurricane ! We shall not discuss the kind of wind indicated by the term used in our version, *Eurochlydon*.

Doubtless it was what in modern time is called a *Levanter*. How soon had our travellers exchanged a situation, which beauty of scenery and delightful climate entitled to the appellation of "Zion," for the dismal terror and gloom of a destructive gale, blowing in all directions. Amidst this danger they ran under the lee of Clauda for partial shelter. Here they did what they could for their own safety, securing by much exertions the canoe or boat by which they might be preserved in case of the loss of their vessel. As she had suffered much from straining, the operation "of undergirding the ship," or passing round the hull several coils of cable or rope, was used, an expedient not unknown even in our times; although from the superiority of the ships now built, and their mode of rigging, it is very seldom needful to practise it. Afraid of being driven upon the quicksands of the Mediterranean, the Greater and Lesser Syrtes, with which the wind from East North-east threatened them, the seamen turned the head of the vessel off shore, loosed the appropriate sails, and hove to on the starboard tack. They were aware how a ship will "live at sea" with plenty of sea-room. They therefore sought to keep from the land. The tempest rather increasing, we read that "the next day they lightened the ship." The most costly treasures should not be retained, when parting with them will help to preserve our lives. In danger most men will promptly and properly part with riches for the sake of life. Why then shall not we part with wealth or any earthly possession or good, real or fancied, when it endangers or is sure to ruin our souls?

The storm still prevailing, the inspired writer says, v. 19, "And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship." This tackling might mean that which was carried for future use or in case of necessity. Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus, assisted with their manual exertions, with the labour of their own hands. It is proper for the believer, especially for the Minister of Christ, to contribute in any way, when duty or humanity calls for it, to the common safety and good. God is thus glorified in the accommodating and ready disposition of His children.

The leaking state of the ship, and the uncertainty of where

they were, rendered the state of those on board almost one of despair. Besides the continuance of the storm "neither sun nor stars in many days appeared." How tremendous a situation! Without an observation, without reckoning, without the aid of the load-stone! They may also have had cold, rain, and snow with the pelting and pitiless tempest. Such are some of the trials to which "those, who go down to the sea in ships," are exposed. How happy it is that in Providence some are ready to brave all this. The purposes of the Most High require it, the good of man is promoted by the courage, ability, and endurance of the seaman in his honourable calling. Nor is he unhappy, though thus exposed to the perils of the deep and the calamities of ship-wreck. "Zebulon can as heartily rejoice in his going out as Issachar in his tents." The hearty wish for prosperity, with which the mariner is, on leaving the harbour, wont to be dismissed, is joyfully responded to by him who wishes for the sea as his appropriate element. It was from among men accustomed to endure hardness from their connection with the sea that our Lord chose His first Apostles. And it is very evident that the chiefest of the Apostles participated largely in sea-faring experience.

When all on board were in a condition the most alarming, the Apostle addressed his companions in danger in the most encouraging and pious manner. After reminding them of the error committed in disregarding his admonition not to leave Fair Havens, Paul, commissioned from on High, assured them all of personal safety, although he declared that the ship should be lost, (see v. 21, 26.) Observe God gave him all that were in the ship with him, and this was to be accomplished without any farther miraculous interposition. The example and the incidents are in consequence fitted to be the more generally useful. To his present hearers, as to the Athenians, he declared God, to most of them, it is to be feared, the Unknown God, "God whose I am and whom I serve." He ardently desired that every man among them should stand in the same covenant relation to Jehovah, which constituted his own honour and happiness. What a sublime occasion for preaching to seamen! Verily it was not unseasonable. We may be reminded of the faithful and severe address of Jonah

to sailors in circumstances equally trying, "I am a Hebrew ; and I fear the Lord, the God of Heaven, that hath made the sea and the dry land." There is no flattery in either case. The worshipper of the True God singles himself out, and stands apart from those who serve not the Living God. "I" is here, and there, emphatic, and solemnly instructive. We hope that in the latter as well as in the former case, it proved spiritually saving. Let Christian voyagers learn to say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," &c.* "By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."† They, that abide under the shadow of Jehovah's wings, are ever safe. So it was with Jacob, when, with no covering but the clouds, he was favoured with his angelic vision. So it was with Paul, a passenger and a prisoner in the sinking ship of Alexandria. The disciple of Christ should "fear not," even in a storm at sea.

When the fourteenth night was come, there were indications of land being nigh. Supposing that St. Paul's Bay, Melsa, is the place referred to, the breakers that would be heard in a North-east gale on a low point of land which the ship must pass within one-quarter of a mile, we can easily understand why "about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country." It is known that the term *Adria* was not limited to what is now designated the Adriatic Sea, but was applied to the whole of the Mediterranean between Crete and Lower Italy. The other supposition is that by *Melita* we should understand *Melida*, a small island in the Gulf of Venice.

The circumstances call forth a display of presence of mind, promptitude, and seamanship, which could scarcely be surpassed in the present day. They must bring the ship, if it be possible, to anchor, and hold on till day-break, when they may perhaps discover some "creek with a shore," into which they may be able to "thrust the ship." In consequence

* Psalm 46, 1.

† Psalm 65, 6.

"they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for day." The smallness of the anchors would require an increased number. Ancient mariners were not provided with a mechanical power adequate to raising such ponderous anchors as are now employed. To "right the anchors" of our modern seamen would have been impossible then. Probably the anchors of our text had only one point or tooth, and not the two flukes. Although the practice of Roman vessels was to cast anchor from the prow, yet sometimes anchors were dropped from the stern. And we must bear in mind that our ship is an Egyptian, which would be provided with halseholes aft. Both ends of the ship being alike, no difficulty would be experienced in anchoring from the stern. If, as has been supposed, this ship was similar to the modern Egyptian Caique of three hundred tons or upwards, she, as they do, would carry her anchors at her stern rather than at her prow. The anchors are wont to be carried to some distance from the ship by means of the skiff, and are dropped in such a manner as to have always one anchor on each side so that the vessel may be between, and the cables not be entangled.

Under pretext of additional care the shipmen "let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship." The vigilance and manly sense of the Apostle again prevent ruin. He exposes the treacherous project of the selfish seamen. "Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off." Here we should mark and admire the practical and sound judgement both of the Apostle and his military companions. He had been assured of the lives of all on board. They were aware of this. Yet neither party evinces the least sympathy with the doctrine of a blind fatalism. Both are alive to the truth, that it is not miraculous preservation which they are to expect, but simply an effectual blessing upon their own energetic endeavours. No inspired writer so strongly and habitually asserts the doctrine of the Divine decrees and sovereignty as Paul; yet who could have manifested more simple and efficient action, as an intel-

ligent and a responsible human being? The reason is that, while he was deeply humbled and grateful to that God of saving mercy who had called and chosen him as a vessel of His grace, he was also honest, manly, earnest and devoutly rational in all his conduct. It is observable that the centurion and soldiers believe Paul now, though they disregarded his counsel at the outset of the voyage. They "cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off," the best possible course of action. Remonstrance would have been misplaced and vain to the unfeeling men who cared only for themselves.

It is pleasing to observe that even this shameful behaviour did not interrupt the harmony of the company. The Apostle's influence may have told here also. He again appears to great advantage. While the crew and passengers were anxiously waiting for day-break, "Paul besought them all to take meat," &c., (see v. 33). Amidst the terror and turbulence of the surpassing gale, that had now for nearly fourteen days threatened them with destruction, the regular meals had been neglected, and all on board had practised partial abstinence. The man of God assured them of perfect safety, "There shall not," said he, "a hair fall from the head of any of you." Nor did he fail to discharge the duty of devout thanksgiving "in presence of them all," that they might join in it, or be aware of their obligation to do so. This refreshment and the Apostle's exertions had a salutary effect. They were "all of good cheer." Not an exception is stated, but the reverse, among the "two hundred three score and sixteen souls" that composed sailors and landmen in the ship.

In order to be thoroughly ready when day should dawn, the seamen immediately after their repast lighted the ship of every thing that might endanger or impede. The last effort with a view to the preservation of their lives was the casting out of the Egyptian wheat intended for the Imperial City.

And now, with the animating light of day to cheer them, our mariners discovered what they wished for, "a certain creek with a shore." For this shore then they made. Cutting the anchor-cables or taking them up, loosing the rudder bands (there might according to ancient usage be two rudders, one of them on each side of the ship) which had been fastened

during the storm, and hoisting the appropriate sails, "they ran the ship aground." They did so upon some piece of land dividing the channel, on each side of which was deep water. The shoal, upon which they grounded, was formed by two opposite currents. In consequence "the forepart stuck fast, and remained immovable; but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves."

At v. 42 we read that "the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape."

This cruel policy must have been consistent with the practice of the Romans. Certainly it was disgraceful to a people who should have been great enough to show the spirit of clemency. The Centurion was not shocked or surprised at the proposal of the soldiers. Out of regard for Paul, however, he preferred another course. Thus was the Apostle the means of the temporal and, we hope, the eternal salvation of many now ready to perish. All were enabled to reach the land, some by swimming, some by boards and broken pieces of the ship.

We witness in all this wonderful preservation the faithfulness of that God who had promised and said to His servant, "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." What an incentive to trust in the Lord, to trust in Him at all times, and to pour out our hearts before Him. Observe the words, "God hath given thee." Paul then had prayed for them. Christian, mark the duty of devotion, benevolence and love here inculcated. Traveller through life, who art living without God, stop, consider, reflect. How much art thou indebted to those who pray for thee, who pray for the sparing goodness of the Almighty. Hath it not yet led thee to repentance? Oh! hasten to turn from all thy sins, turn unto the Lord, pray for life eternal. And this is life eternal to know the Only True God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. Amen.

Let us sing Paraphrase 48, 6.

Let us pray.

How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O Lord! Thou art good unto all, and Thy tender mercies are experienced by all the children of men. We adore Thee for all-pervading Providence. Without our Father a sparrow falleth not to the ground.

Thou causest Thy sun to arise and Thy rain to descend upon the just and unjust. And Thou doest this in some measure because Thy people are the salt of the earth. Thou hearest their prayers and art merciful even to the evil and unthankful. Oh! may we be the true disciples of Jesus. He has said to each of them, 'the very hairs of your head are all numbered.' Oh, that the gracious words, 'Fear not, little flock,' spoken by the Good Shepherd to His genuine followers, "and for it is your Father's pleasure to give you the Kingdom," may be applicable to us! That they may be, enable us to know the voice of Jesus and to follow Him.

Bless, Holy Father, for our spiritual good the exercises in which we have been engaged. Keep us ever more in Thy love and fear. And, when the voyage of life is ended, may we, not having made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, but having overcome, obtain admission to the haven of everlasting rest and felicity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Paraphrase 29, 1.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

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FIFTEENTH SUNDAY.

Let us begin the worship of God by singing to His praise in Psalm 89, 1.

Let us pray.

"How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God ! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy House, and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life : in Thy light shall we see light. O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee ; and Thy righteousness to the upright in heart."

We adore Thee, O Lord, as the Creator and Preserver of all mankind. Thou art good unto all, even to the evil and unthankful. We praise Thy most Holy Name for that Blessed Gospel of Thy Son, which offers peace and pardon to the repenting sinner. We praise Thee that in Thy merciful Providence we have heard its glad tidings. Oh ! give us the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus to enable us to know savingly the joyful sound. Enable us to receive the Truth in the love of it. May the life, that we shall henceforth live, be by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us. May the operation and effects of our faith be such as that they will be manifestly the fruits of the Spirit. Giving all diligence, may we add to our faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; and to knowledge temperance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; and to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity. For, if these things be in us, they make us that we shall neither be

barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we constantly remember, and have deeply impressed on our hearts, that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." O may we understand experimentally, with joy and peace, that "they, that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

Almighty and most Merciful Father, we rejoice in Thy all-pervading, sovereign, supreme sway, The sea is Thine, and Thou madest it; and Thy hands formed the dry land. We would therefore encourage one another and say, as taught in Thy Holy Word, "O, come let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker." How blessed and happy are they whom Thou keepest as Thine own adopted ones. O Thou great and most condescending Heavenly Parent, it is our comfort and rejoicing to believe that they are safe, that the seaman is safe whom Thou regardest as reconciled in Christ Jesus. We delight to bear in mind that the King of Zion, the meek and lowly Saviour, rules over winds, and seas, and storms, and all the events and issues of life. He can say to the tempest, "Peace, be still." Or He can advance Thy glory in promoting His own kingdom in the souls of His people by means of seas, of shipwreck and escape, of stormy wind fulfilling His word, and of the quiet and calm with which again the heart of man is gladdened.

O God, may we have a continual sense of dependence on Thee. May we cherish the consoling assurance that He, that keepeth Israel, slumbereth not nor sleepeth, and that in all circumstances the believer in Jesus may with contrition, and love, and confidence, repose as in the arms of Him that loved us from eternity, and who in the fulness of time died to wash us from our sins in His own precious blood. And all we ask is for Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us

our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let us sing in Psalm 132, 26.

Let us read Acts 28.

SERMON.

You will find the subject of discourse in Acts XXVIII. 1.

The unknown island, upon which the numerous company landed, was, they soon ascertained, Melita, a name indicating that it abounded with honey. Though no boat or vessel had put off from the shore to help the life-endangered mariners, owing to the time probably of the ship-wreck, yet all safely escaped to land. For the high esteem in which Julius held Paul, he saved all the prisoners and would not allow the soldiers to kill any of them. And it evidently appears that, as he, that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward, so Julius was no loser, but an unspeakable gainer for his courteous, humane, benevolent conduct towards the Apostle and on his account towards others. Not one of the prisoners seems to have sought to escape by flight, or to have taken any unprincipled advantage of the circumstances of the Centurion and soldiers.

It is pleasing also to find that the population of the island evinced a spirit of warm-hearted hospitality and every desire to assist and comfort the distressed voyagers. The historian says, v. 2, "And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness : for they kindled a fire, and received us every one because of the present rain, and because of the cold." The place and its inhabitants, that are distinguished for great kindness and cordial assistance to the ship-wrecked or distressed mariner, are highly honourable. They prove themselves advanced in the charities of human nature and superior to the sordidness of selfish men. Such persons have always

been the subjects of some elevating influences. They are not savages. They are generous, sympathizing, beneficent. So we perceive in the Maltese Islanders of our text, whose friendly and simple attentions to the sufferers of the wrecked Alexandrian ship are recorded with marked approbation by the inspired evangelistic writer. Among such a people the minister of Christ will be sanguine of an effectual door being opened for the introduction of Christianity. So, there is little doubt, it happened in the present instance.

The term "barbarous people" proves nothing against Malta being the Melita of our ship's company. The Greeks were wont to apply the epithet "barbarous" to all who did not speak their language. The Romans followed their example. Hence the appellation "barbarous" may in our text only signify that the inhabitants of Malta did not speak the Latin language. That they were a superstitious and idolatrous people is obvious from what we read at the 4th and following verses.

The active and kindly disposition of Paul caused him to gather a bundle of sticks, which he laid upon the fire; but "there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand." The expectation and ideas of the heathen observers are then stated. They looked that the supposed murderer, who had escaped the sea, should have swelled with inflammation, or taken fire, or fallen dead instantly: "but, after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god." The Apostle would be still less gratified with this supposition than their first. This case reminds us of that of Lystra where the people would have sacrificed to Barnabas and Paul as deities; but the men of God ran in among them, crying out, and saying, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the Living God, that made heaven, and earth, and sea, and all things that are therein."* We may well believe that Paul at Malta preached the Living and

* Acts 14, 15.

True God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent for guilty and ignorant men.

What a blessing Paul and his companions would be to the people of Malta during their three months' sojourn in the island! Doubtless they fully made known the wretched state of man by nature and practice, and the abounding riches of the Divine grace in Christ Jesus.

We read particularly of the chief man of the island, the Roman governor or prefect. His name was Publius. The historian, including himself and probably Aristarchus with the Apostle, says of Publius, "who received us, and lodged us three days courteously." These servants of Jesus Christ commended themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The courtesy of this great man, the highest of the island, to the ministers of the Crucified Nazarene, is recorded, like that of Julius, in the inspired narrative. The Spirit of all goodness presents in these instances illustrations, borrowed from distinguished heathen, of his own precepts which Christians may well copy. Julius and Publius exemplify what Peter inculcates, "having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."* The Christian, who violates the law of courtesy, does dishonour to the Master by whose name he is called, and is reproved by the excellence of the Roman officers of our narrative.

The Christian benevolence and miraculous power of the Apostle were evinced in restoring from the utmost prostration the father of Publius, and in the healing of many who were diseased in various parts of the island. Doubtless the salvation of their precious souls was never lost sight of by Paul in his dealings with the Maltese. And that his ministry was attended with the effectual blessing seems implied at v. 10th, where we read of the fruits of righteousness, love and Christian liberality, which fruits, when they are not discoverable in the professing Christian, there is reason to fear that the Holy Spirit of Christ, whose fruits they are, has never been savingly experienced in the soul. It was otherwise with the good people of Malta. Of them St. Luke says, "Who also

* Petor 3, 8.

honoured us with many honours ; and, when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary." All the crew and passengers seem to have shared in the kindly and beneficent attentions of those who were grateful for the priceless benefits that had been conferred upon them through the instrumentality of the Apostle. We may infer from this that the whole company, who had been saved from a watery grave by the special goodness of God, had conducted themselves well during their protracted residence at Malta. What a happiness both for them and their generous entertainers was the admirable character and influence of Paul ! And how manifestly may we here see that bonds, afflictions, journeyings, sailing, peril, storm, ship-wreck, are all made subservient to the eternal good of those who are the objects of the Divine favour ! How perspicuously too may we behold that in every situation the devoted disciple of Jesus is a blessing of inestimable worth to his fellow-creatures ! Let every follower of the Lamb ceaselessly aim at being so.

We come now to the concluding part of the Apostle's voyage to Rome. Again did Paul and his friends sail " in a ship of Alexandria." Compared with their previous experience during the boisterous gales, and wintry tempests that had overtaken them, the present passage was quiet and prosperous. We may form some idea of the weather from the fact of this new ship of Alexandria not starting till after three months subsequent to the ship-wreck. She " had wintered in the isle." We are told that her " sign was Castor and Pollux." This painting probably indicated that the ship was committed to the protection of these two deities. These were according to heathen mythology twin sons of Jupiter by Leda. The appellation of the Sign of Gemini or the Twins in the Signs of the Zodiac is borrowed from them. They were supposed to be lesser deities under Neptune, the god of the sea, and to have influence over storms and winds. Paul had no control over the ship or its sign. He no doubt regretted with deepened intensity the blindness of idolatry, and we may be certain that whatever was in his power would be done to turn men from dumb idols and lying vanities to the Living God.

The preservation of this ship of Alexandria, whilst that in which Paul was a passenger was destroyed aptly point out to us the vicissitudes and uncertainty of this mortal life, the business of the world, and the calling of the seamen. We see here two ships of Alexandria, both bound to Italy, both passing the same route, both, it may be said, reaching Malta : yet how different their circumstances ; the one a total wreck with the entire loss of a valuable cargo, the other having reached Malta in time, lying snugly moored there, and, when the proper season came round, taking her departure for her destined port. Thus " the Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich ; He bringeth low, and lifteth up."* And " promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge ; He putteth down one, and setteth up another."† Let all then remember that God reigneth, overruling all the affairs of men. And let us not fail to improve our meditations in connection with the subject before us by having the conviction more deeply engraven upon our souls that even " the cloudy and dark day," that even the dispensations of Divine Providence which appear the most disastrous, that disappointment and delay, storm and shipwreck—are all made to work for good to the followers of the Lamb, and may be made the instruments of inestimable blessing to many who otherwise would be left living without God and without salvation in the world. Let us see God in every thing. And let us rejoice when we are told, " The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked : the Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers : Bashan languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at His presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein."‡

The first place at which the Apostle and his companions

* 1 Samuel 2, 7.

† Psalm 65, 6, 7.

‡ Nahum 1, 3, &c.

stopped was Syracuse. There they landed and tarried three days, probably for the purposes of trade. Syracuse was situated on the east coast of the Island of Sicily, and was its principal city. There was much intercourse between it and Malta; and the ship probably had taken freight or passengers for Syracuse from Malta. We do not read that there were any Christians there. Thence our voyagers went round to Rhegium (the modern Reggio), a city in the southern extremity of Italy. Here they remained one day; we are not told that they landed. The evangelist goes on, "and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next (or second) day to Puteoli: Where we found brethren, and were desired (or invited) to tarry with them seven days." Puteoli was a sea-port town near Naples. The growing regard of the Centurion for Paul and those who were his endeared Christian brethren, obtained the valued privilege of spending a week with those members of Christ who resided at Puteoli. Puteoli was situated within the Gulf of Cumae or Bay of Naples, near to Baiae, the Bath of Italy. This was the place to which the ship was bound, so that here, we may observe, the Apostle's sea-voyage ends. He and the rest of the party were conducted to Rome by land.

From the "Eternal City," as Rome is wont to be designated, a large proportion at least of the members of the Church went to meet Paul. The inspired narrator informs us, "And from thence they came, to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and 'The Three Taverns.'" The brethren of Puteoli, it is likely, had conveyed to those of Rome the tidings of the arrival of the Apostle of the Gentiles. And the latter, "beloved of God, called to be saints," contributed a testimony of respect and affection most seasonable. Paul felt it to be so. When he saw them, "he thanked God and took courage." He had long cherished the hope of a prosperous journey to them. But it may be that even the great Apostle, the noblest of noble Christians, and you know that Christianity is the highest style of man, it may be that even this noblest of the noble in Christ Jesus had felt depressed in spirit, saddened, and cast down by the severe trials through which he was passing; he would not have been a man, not a

noble man, had he not *felt*,—doubtless he felt most acutely. Grace had given a tone, but in no degree impaired the liveliness, depth, and energy of emotion which were natural to this hero of the Cross. But, as he was cheered during the progress of his voyage by the vision, and the “Fear not, Paul,” of the angel of God, so now again by the sight, the numbers, and the bearing, of the excellent Christians of Rome, “whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.”

When we see the sympathy and love of the Head of the Church towards His chosen servants and to all His members, how well may we say with the prophet, “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” The precept of the Holy Apostle himself may aptly here be addressed to the Zion-ward pilgrim. “Rejoice ever more, and pray without ceasing.” When the Christian brethren of Rome came to ‘The Three Taverns,’ a distance of thirty-three miles, and to Appii Forum, distant fifty-one miles from Rome, to do honour to this most distinguished servant of Jesus Christ, and were not ashamed of the prisoner of the Lord or his chain, surely God was glorified, His servant rejoiced in God his Saviour, and many, we may hope, were savingly benefitted by witnessing the operation of this genuine Christianity. The reflections, which the inspired record of it is fitted to awaken and call up, ought always to be productive of great benefit to the reader or hearer of the Word of God.

At verse 16 we read, “And, when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.” From the account sent by Festus, and the friendly report and commendation of Julius, the Apostle was thus privileged. Every thing good in human nature and every Christian feeling will ever honour the memory of Julius for his kindness and aid to Paul. He was probably one of the chief captains, and, it may be, had heard the Apostle’s brilliant and unanswerable defence before king Agrippa. He

was perfectly satisfied as to the purity of his motives and excellence of his character. And who can tell how much indebted this soldier may have been to the Minister of Christ ! Through his instrumentality Julius may have become a cordial believer in Jesus of Nazareth. All praise be to the distinguished Roman who became increasingly a friend to the prisoner who was so for the sake of the Cross of Christ. Let his name and his memory be cherished in the affections and esteem of Christians, until the world that now is has been superseded by the world that is to come, and then let us hope we shall see Paul and Julius in holiest and unending fellowship.

The exercise of the offices and qualities of humanity and kindness is ever honourable, especially to the individual who bestows and evinces them. Read such a passage as the following, with which the prophet Jeremiah closes his Book, and say if you are not constrained to render a tribute of esteem and gratitude to the Babylonish monarch for his royal favour and munificence conferred upon his princely Jewish prisoner. "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, King of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach, King of Babylon, in the first year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin, King of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison. And spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the Kings that were with him in Babylon, And changed his prison garments : and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. And for his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the King of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life." This is god-like. It elevates man in the scale of being. Even his erring and disobedient people God pities, and, when in the hour of sorrow they call upon Him, He hears their prayer. The Psalmist says of Israel of old, "Nevertheless he regarded their afflictions when He heard their cry: And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. He made them to be pitied of all those that carried them captives."* Does the Lord manifest such compassion and tend-

* Psalm 106, 44, &c.

erness towards those who have not walked worthy of their holy vocation ? Much more may we expect that He will magnify the riches of His loving-kindness to His chosen and loved children who glorify Him by a conversation becoming the Gospel. It was His Spirit that caused the brethren to act so cheerfully, who, when, as Luke informs us, they heard of the prisoner for Christ's sake, "came to meet us as far as Apii Forum, and the Three Taverns : whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Let those who now bear the Christian name, if they would be counted worthy to belong to the same holy fraternity, evince a similar disposition, showing consideration,* love, courage, and activity. These qualities are all prominent in the believers before us.

In what remains of the chapter there is much related that is fitted to show that the Apostle Paul had in the highest sense of the words a prosperous journey to Rome, notwithstanding all the apparently untoward incidents of the voyage. At verse 17 we read, "And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together." When they were come together, he explained in a brief, manly, and perspicuous manner the incidents that had brought him among them, concluding with the affecting words, "For this cause therefore have I called you to see you, and to speak with you : because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain," (verse 20.) The crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth the Apostle avowed to be the Messiah, "the hope of Israel." It was for his faith in this Redeemer and his love to Him that he now appeared chained to a Roman soldier who attended him. How intensely affecting was the statement of the Minister of Christ ! All present seem to have been moved by it. "And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest : for, as concerning this sect, we know that

* Much evil results among professing Christians from inconsideration. This state or habit is highly culpable and sinful. The love of God in the soul never fails to render the individual considerate. How attentive is the worldling to serve his master. Can he who is totally inconsiderate be a Christian ?

everywhere it is spoken against. And, when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging ; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." Verses 21—23.

Here was a long discourse. It occupied "from morning till evening." The preacher was full of his subject, he was fired with the constraining love of his Master, and with patriotic and Christian affection to his audience. We behold in Paul the philanthropist and the patriot. Where will you find such another ? With perhaps one exception, Moses, the annals of our race supply no such specimen of man.

The preaching of "Christ crucified" was not absolutely unsuccessful on this occasion. While some believed not the things that were spoken, "some believed." Be of good courage then, herald of the Cross. Thou shalt not labour in vain. The Word of the Sovereign Lord shall not return unto Him void. And with regard to thine own duty that Word to thee is "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

We may estimate something of the Apostle's success at Rome from what he tells the Philippians, "But I would, ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have," &c., (verses 12, 14 of 1st Chap. of Philippians.) To the same excellent society of Christians he says (4. 22), "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household."

We read at v. 30, 31, "And Paul dwelt," &c., no man forbidding him ! Why could not the soldier to whom he was chained forbid him ? Because the soldier's heart was disposed not to do so by the Omnipotent God of the heart. Or it may be that freedom was conceded to the Apostle to a certain degree on his parole. During all these two years there was no persecution of the Christians. God was preparing His Church for that of Nero, the Caesar of that day. After the two years had elapsed, Paul was probably set at liberty. He was a second time a prisoner at Rome and became a martyr for Christ. But in the prospect of sealing his testimony with

his blood we hear the aged champion and the strong believer exclaiming, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." (2 Timothy 4, 6, &c.)

Beloved friends, be it our constant and lofty aim to live so as to obtain the reward of grace, "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give at that day" to all those that "love His appearing." Let every thing we do, and every thing that we do not do, be associated in our minds with the love of Christ and a meetness for His coming. Amen.

Let us sing Paraphrase 55, 2.

Let us pray.

Almighty and Everlasting God, grant, we beseech Thee, that the truths and lessons of Thy Sacred Word, to which we have now been listening, may be permanently and savingly engraven upon our souls. O number us with Thy saints, who fight the good fight of faith and lay hold upon eternal life. Pardon for the sake of the once Crucified Redeemer, Thy Beloved Son, all our sins. They are beyond all number, yet Thou knowest them all ; they are exceedingly sinful because of the light and the love against which we have sinned. May we, through Thy Spirit enabling us, repent us truly of them all, and experience the blessed remission of sins, which is received by all those who believe in the name of Jesus Christ.

May we not only be freely justified by Thy grace through the Redemption of Christ Jesus, may we abound also in every good word and work. May all old things pass away, and all things become new. May our hearts be pure and our lives holy. Let no profaneness or evil speaking proceed out of our lips. May we be enabled to crucify the flesh in the affections

and lusts. May we be kindly-affectioned one to another, loving as brethren. May we ever be charitable, beneficent, and earnestly desirous to advance the safety, comfort, and happiness of all around us.

We commend to Thy Paternal compassion the widow, and the fatherless, and the stranger. Protect, guide, and bless all who in the pursuit of their honest calling are required to travel by land or by sea. Bless our country, our Queen and all under her and over us. Bless those who serve their country either as soldiers or seamen. May they be blessed with pardon and renovation through the blood and Holy Spirit of Christ; and become blessings in their sphere. May sea-officers and land-officers be just, humane, courteous, and obliging; above all may they be thoroughly Christian. May the Missionaries of the Gospel and the Ministers of Christ receive the same Spirit that animated the holy Apostle of the Gentiles, and follow him as he followed his loved Lord and sought the promotion of His kingdom in the salvation of perishing sinners. And, when the voyage of this mortal life shall to ourselves be ended, may we be admitted to the House of many mansions, which our Heavenly Master prepared for all His followers. And the glory we shall ascribe to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Let us conclude by singing Psalm 25, 6.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

THE END.

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